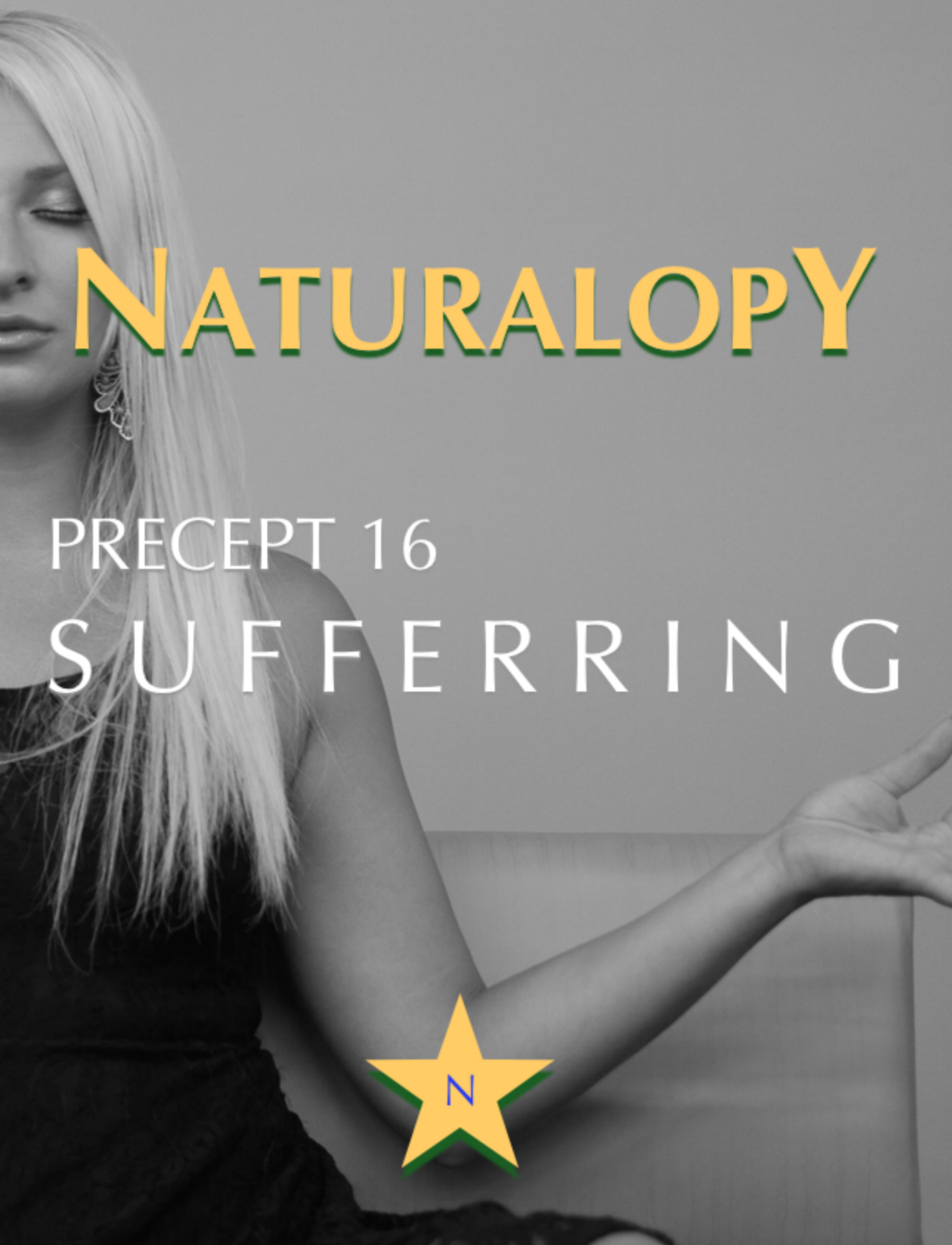


NATURALOPY

PRECEPT 16

SUFFERING

NATURALOPY

CELEBRATING HUMANITY

Since time immemorial, our ancestors have gone to great lengths to fabricate myths and fables to answer the six primary existential questions of life:

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

For thousands of years, the East Indians, Sumerians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Mayans, and other great civilizations of the past have conjured fairy tales of a god or group of gods to justify their existence. We now look at their abandoned gods and think how naive and backward our ancestors must have been.

Today, the Christians, Jews, and Muslims hold steadfast to the idea that an omnipotent figure created the Universe and Earth 6,000 - 10,000 years ago. And that all humans were seeded by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden somewhere in modern day Iran or Iraq. These beliefs persist despite the fact that science has refuted and disclaimed those assertions with empirical evidence—evidence that can be verified by anyone willing to do the research. Most don't, thus the perpetual conflict between the Christians, Jews, and Muslims.

The Universe is roughly 13.8 billion years old; the Earth 4.6 billion years old; Humans are the product of evolution, 4.3 billion years in the making.

There is no need to attribute to the gods what Humanity has achieved.

Naturalopy (naCHərə lō pē)
noun

1. The philosophy of adopting universal knowledge and collective wisdom from historical and contemporary sources to form a belief system.

2. The Naturalopist belief system, founded on the shared knowledge and experiences of Humanity; modern philosophy; natural philosophy.

Naturalopist (naCHərə lō pist)
noun

1. One who believes in universal knowledge and collective wisdom as a basis for her or his moral guidelines and belief system; naturalist; spiritualist.

2. One who embraces the 20 Naturalopic Precepts as a guideline for a worldview; acknowledges the law of cause and effect.

3. One who adopts preeminent ideologies and philosophies regardless of their origin; objective mindset.

Naturalopic (naCHərə lō pik)
adjective

Of or relating to the precepts of Naturalopy; collective knowledge, objectivity, cause and effect, empirical evidence, spirituality, transparency, natural philosophy, Nature; equality before the Law, beneficial to Humanity.

The 20 Precepts of Naturalopy

Precept (pre sept)
noun

> A rule, directive, or principle that guides one's actions, particularly as pertains to moral conduct.

Naturalopy is structured into 20 primary precepts, most of them with supporting precepts.

1. Freewill	11. Happiness
2. Karma	12. Love
3. Simplicity	13. Dreams
4. Health	14. Wisdom
5. Spirituality	15. Success
6. Compassion	16. Suffering
7. Purpose	17. Forgiveness
8. Virtue	18. Salvation
9. Attitude	19. Liberty
10. Character	20. Time

When taken as a whole and expanded in detail, the Naturalopic framework of 20 precepts is more comprehensive in scope than any single religion or philosophy because it embraces all available knowledge.

Life can be complex, therefore our moral guidelines and belief system are only complete, accurate, and objective when they're derived from multiple historical and contemporary sources, regardless of their origin.

Life did not come with a manual. Life is a learning process. We make mistakes; we are not sinners. The better choices we make, the higher our quality of life. But we can only make better choices when we are enlightened...

NATURALOPY

PRECEPT 16

SUFFERING

PRECEPT 16

SUFFERING

suffering

misery, torment, distress, affliction, discomfort, anguish, adversity, hardship

1. The condition of someone who suffers; a state of pain or distress.

2. The state of enduring pain, misery, loss, or distress.

Suffering is an unnatural part of the human experience, but sometimes it is necessary to teach us lessons on what to do and what not to do. In adults, for the things within our control, suffering is self-inflicted—suffering is the consequence of the choices we make. In children, suffering is inherited through the parents—children suffer as the result of their caretakers's karma.

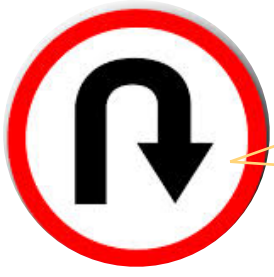
In general, when the desire for wants far exceeds the fulfillment of needs, suffering results. For example, greed (selfish, excessive desire) is a primary cause of suffering. Greed is abnormal and must be subdued if we want peace of mind—a greedy mind is deluged with excessive consumerism and irrationality.

On the other side of the scale, ignorance is also a leading cause of suffering. By believing what we are taught without questioning authority, quasi-authoritative institutions, religious institutions, or false friends, we end up making uninformed decisions that are detrimental to our well-being. Question everything to avoid suffering.

Calm the mind with meditation and all the causes of suffering will surface.

If the people we associate with cause us suffering, then it is best to remove them from our life. Those who cause suffering will inflict damage on those they come in contact with.

For the things within our control, we are responsible for our own suffering. Therefore, we alone can remedy it through self-education and the choices we make.



No matter how far you have gone on a wrong road, turn back.

Turkish Proverb

Sometimes we need to hurt in order to grow.
We must fail in order to know.
We must lose in order to gain.
Some lessons are learned best through pain.

Naturalopist

There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.

Carl Jung

The turning point in the process of growing up is when you discover the core of strength within you that survives all hurt.

Max Lerner

There comes a point in every person's life when they must realize, "I can't outrun my darkness, I can only fill it with light."

Yehuda Berg

The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, is nothing, and becomes nothing. He may avoid suffering and sorrow, but he simply cannot learn and feel and change and grow and love and live.

Leo F. Buscaglia

People have to really suffer before they can risk doing what they love.

Chuck Palahniuk

In certain people, suffering is karma claiming what's due. Once the karmic debt is paid, then enlightenment begins and suffering subsides.

Trung Nguyen

What does not destroy me makes me stronger.

Friedrich Nietzsche

Life is very interesting. In the end, some of your greatest pains become your greatest strengths.

Drew Barrymore

To stop suffering, stop greediness.
Greediness is a source of suffering.

Buddha

The goal of spiritual practice is full recovery, and the only thing you need to recover from is a fractured sense of self.

Marianne Williamson

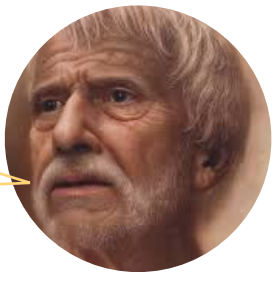
Nobody, as long as he moves about among the chaotic currents of life, is without trouble.

Carl Jung

Some of life's best lessons are learned at the worst times.

Wilson Kanadi

There are more things to alarm us than to harm us, and we suffer more often in apprehension than reality.



Seneca

Blessed are the cracked, for they shall let in the light.

Groucho Marx

Man cannot remake himself without suffering, for he is both the marble and the sculptor.

Alexis Carrel

Life without pain has no meaning.

Arthur Schopenhauer

All life is suffering. All suffering is caused by desire.

Buddha

Understand the suffering of worldly existence.

Abandon its causes of ignorance and selfishness.

Practice the path of meditation and compassion.

Awaken from suffering within Great Peace.

Buddha

If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself but to your own estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.

Marcus Aurelius

Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars.

Khalil Gibran

Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind.

Bertrand Russell

All the world is full of suffering. It is also full of overcoming.

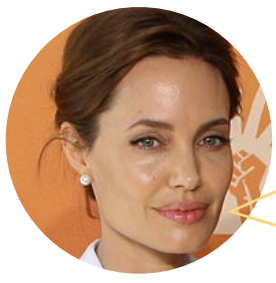
Helen Keller

If you find yourself in a hole, stop digging.

Will Rogers

Often the thought of pain is actually worse than the pain itself.

Greg Behrendt



Without pain, there would be no suffering, without suffering we would never learn from our mistakes. To make it right, pain and suffering is the key to all windows, without it, there is no way of life.

Angelina Jolie

I gather strength from life's storms.

Jonathan Lockwood Huie

The strongest souls emerge out of suffering.

Khalil Gibran

As an adult making conscious decisions, suffering is Nature's way of telling us that our behaviors are against Her laws.

Trung Nguyen

Bad things do happen; how I respond to them defines my character and the quality of my life. I can choose to sit in perpetual sadness, immobilized by the gravity of my loss, or I can choose to rise from the pain and treasure the most precious gift I have—life itself.

Walter Anderson

Men are disturbed not by things, but by the view which they take of them. Our busy minds are forever jumping to conclusions, manufacturing and interpreting signs that aren't there.

Epictetus

The root of suffering is attachment.

Buddha

Only a person who has experienced suffering can truly understand the suffering of another person.

Trung Nguyen

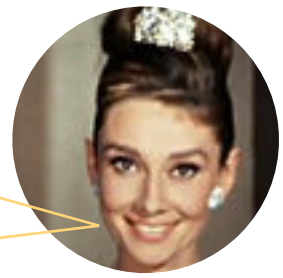
Suffering is instructive to the soul.

Naturalopist

Catastrophe is the essence of the spiritual path, a series of breakdowns allowing us to discover the threads that weave all of life into a whole cloth.

Roshi Joan Halifax

People, even more than things, have to be restored, renewed, revived, reclaimed, and redeemed; never throw out anyone.



Audrey Hepburn

It is better to start over than continue down a path you know is wrong for your soul.

Denise Linn

Most of the really interesting, compassionate and influential people in the world have faced major disappointments, had their hearts broken once or twice, and experienced loneliness, despair and failure. Not surprisingly, these are the same people who create the beautiful art, music, dance and theatre around us and who grow into intuitive, generous, and loving pathfinders that open the hearts of others.

Paul S. Boynton

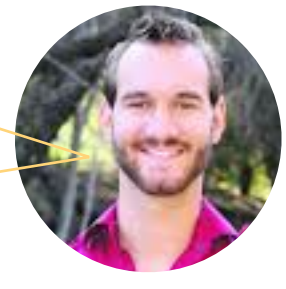
If you suffer it is because of you, if you feel blissful it is because of you. Nobody else is responsible—only you and you alone. You are your hell and your heaven, too.

Osho

No matter how hard the past, you can always begin again.

Buddha

We cannot and should not ever compare suffering.



Nick Vujicic

What is hell? I maintain that it is the suffering of being unable to love.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky

The wound is the place where the Light enters you.

Rumi

The only thing that overcomes hard luck is hard work.

Harry Golden

Don't ask why someone keeps hurting you.
Ask why you keep letting them.

Naturalopist

Every flower must grow through dirt, endure the wind, survive the rain, and fight the cold before it can become a thing of beauty. Likewise, every human must grow through pain, endure setback, survive hardship, and fight the past before they can become a beautiful person.

Trung Nguyen

To find yourself, think for yourself.

Socrates

Never to suffer would never to have been blessed.

Edgar Allan Poe

There is no witness so terrible and no accuser so powerful as the conscience which dwells within us.

Sophocles

Remember that you're human. It's okay to make mistakes and have a meltdown. Just don't unpack and live there. Cry it out, then focus on where you want to go.

Motherly Advice

No tree, it is said, can grow to heaven unless its roots reach down to hell.

Carl Jung

People who love themselves, don't hurt other people. The more we hate ourselves, the more we want others to suffer.

Dan Pearce

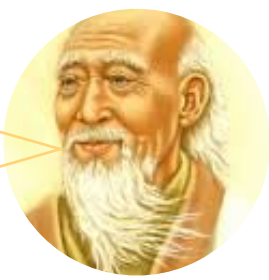
Turn your wounds into wisdom.

Oprah Winfrey

He who has done what is right is free from fear.

Buddha

If you want to become full, let yourself be empty.



Lao Tzu

It takes courage to endure the sharp pains of self-discovery, rather than choose to take the dull pain of unconsciousness that would last the rest of our lives.

Marianne Williamson

It is an easy thing for one whose foot is on the outside of calamity to give advice and to rebuke the sufferer.

Aeschylus

Carl Jung

There is no coming to consciousness without pain. People will do anything, no matter how absurd, in order to avoid facing their own soul. One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.

Respect yourself to walk away from anything that no longer serves you, grows you, or makes you happy.

Robert Tew

ADDICTION

addiction

enslavement, fixation, craving, dependence, obsession

1. A state that is characterized by compulsive drug use or compulsive engagement in rewarding behavior, despite negative consequences.

2. A habit or practice that damages, jeopardizes or shortens one's life but when ceased causes trauma.

3. A pathological relationship to mood altering experience that has life damaging consequences.

The majority of people suffer of their own freewill (free will). Their choice of suffering is often addiction. Addiction, whether to drug, gambling, or sex, is an attempt to escape reality or a shortcut to pleasure; although fleeting, painful, and damaging. In other words, addiction is an attempt to dull pain, to fill the emptiness of the soul, to fill time.

When addiction is causing us to suffer, we need to uncover the root causes. This can be done by asking the following questions:

What or who is hurting us?
Who do we think about when are engaged in our substance of choice?
What psychological issues of our past have not been dealt with?
What are the things that we should be doing do but are not doing?
Are we aware of addiction's consequences?
Are we aware of how our body (individual biochemistry) works?
Are we aware of how our mind works?
What are we susceptible to?

Are we aware of the triggers?

Many addictions are rooted in psychological trauma and should be treated as health issues and not criminal ones. One important note on addiction is that it's not what we're trying to quit, but what will we replace it with?

Addiction is suffering.

An addict is someone who uses their body to tell society that something is wrong with their soul.

Stella Adler

Addictions are among the most powerful self-delusions we experience. So, why do we gravitate toward the objects of our addictions? Because they change the way that we think about ourselves. Our addictions pull us further and further into our self-centered imaginary worlds, while intimacy draws us out of our self-absorption and into a real experience of others, the world and ourselves.

Matthew Kelly

Where life is seen as a burden, full of unpleasant and useless struggles, addiction is a way to surrender. The difference between not being addicted and being addicted is the difference between seeing the world as your arena and seeing the world as your prison. These contrasting orientations suggest a standard for assessing whether a substance or activity is addictive for a particular person. If what a person is engaged in enhances his ability to live, if it enables him to work more effectively, to appreciate the things around him more, and finally if it allows him to grow, to change and expand, then it is not addictive. If, on the other hand, it diminishes him, if it makes him less attractive, less capable, less sensitive and if it limits him, stifles him, harms him and/or those around him, it is addictive.

Richard Mckenzie Neal

Addiction begins with the hope that something "out there" can instantly fill up the emptiness inside.

Jean Kilbourne

How a society views individuals who engage in addictive behaviors has an important influence on addiction and recovery from addiction. If addiction is seen as a moral failing, it will be condemned. If seen as a deficit in knowledge, it will be educated. If the addiction is viewed as an acceptable aberration, it will be tolerated. If the addiction is considered illegal, it will be prosecuted. If viewed as an illness, it will be treated. Social policies mirror these different views with strategies ranging from prohibition and criminalization to hospitalization and mandated treatment.

Carlo C. Diclemente

At first, addiction is maintained by pleasure, but the intensity of this pleasure gradually diminishes and the addiction is then maintained by the avoidance of pain.

Frank Tallis

Every form of addiction is bad, no matter whether the narcotic be alcohol, morphine or idealism.

Carl Jung

Addicts know no shame. You disgrace yourself so many times you become immune to it.

John Grisham

What if I'm so broken I can never do something as basic as feed myself? Do you realize how twisted that is? It amazes me sometimes that humans still exist. We're just animals, after all. And how can an animal get so removed from nature that it loses the instinct to keep itself alive?

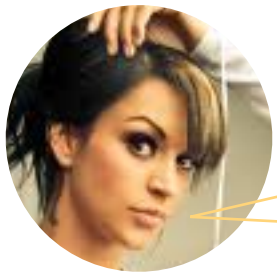
Amy Reed

Addiction is more malleable than you know. When people come to me for therapy, they often ask me whether their behavior constitutes a real addiction (or whether they are really alcoholic, etc.). My answer is that this is not the important question. The important questions are how many problems is the involvement causing you, how much do you want to change it, and how can we go about change?

Stanton Peele

Addiction isn't about using drugs. It's about what the drug does to your life.

Enock Maregesi



Why get high on drugs when you can get high on life?

Keri Williams

The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love.

Orlando Battista

Breaking News: The Pity Train has just derailed at the intersection of Suck It Up and Move On, and crashed into We All Have Problems, before coming to a complete stop at Get the Heck Over It. Any complaints about how we operate can be forwarded to 1-800-waa-waah. This is Dr. Sniffle Reporting LIVE from QuitYourFussing.

Naturalopist

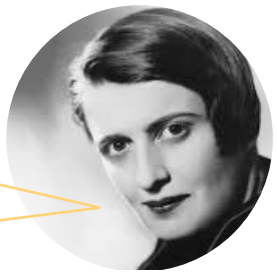
A second chance doesn't mean anything if you haven't learned from your first mistake.

Motherly Advice

There are all kinds of addicts, I guess. We all have pain. And we all look for ways to make the pain go away.

Sherman Alexie

Do not let your fire go out, spark by irreplaceable spark, in the hopeless swamps of the approximate, the not-quite, the not-yet, the not-at-all. Do not let the hero in your soul perish, in lonely frustration for the life you deserved, but have never been able to reach. Check your road and the nature of your battle. The world you desired can be won. It exists, it is real, it is possible, it is yours.



Ayn Rand

I have absolutely no pleasure in the stimulants in which I sometimes so madly indulge. It has not been in the pursuit of pleasure that I have periled life and reputation and reason. It has been the desperate attempt to escape from torturing memories, from a sense of insupportable loneliness and a dread of some strange impending doom.

Edgar Allan Poe

At various points in my life I was addicted to gambling, drugs, and sex. What helped me overcome them was learning about nutrition, acceptance, and free will. What we put in our body impacts our mind: how we think and feel. The right foods nourish our cells and reduce physical craving. The right foods also enhance our mental clarity, make us more alert and energetic. I also took responsibility for everything that happened to me and accepted the fact that I couldn't change the past—all those years were wasted. I also accepted the fact that, "If it's to be, it's up to me." No bearded guy in the cloud or 12-step program was going to solve my problems. I had to solve them myself, one day at a time.

Trung Nguyen

JUNKY

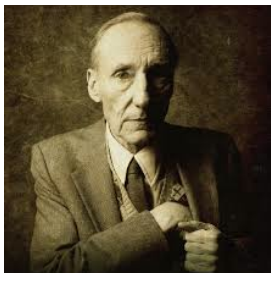
The question is frequently asked: Why does a man become a drug addict?

The answer is that he usually does not intend to become an addict. You don't wake up one morning and decide to be a drug addict. It takes at least three months' shooting twice a day to get any habit at all. And you don't really know what junk sickness is until you have had several habits. It took me almost six months to get my first habit, and then the withdrawal symptoms were mild. I think it no exaggeration to say it takes about a year and several hundred injections to make an addict.

The questions, of course, could be asked: Why did you ever try narcotics? Why did you continue using it long enough to become an addict?

You become a narcotics addict because you do not have strong motivations in the other direction.

Junk wins by default. I tried it as a matter of curiosity. I drifted along taking shots when I could score. I ended up hooked. Most addicts I have talked to report a similar experience. They did not start using drugs for any reason they can remember. They just drifted along until they got hooked. If you have never been addicted, you can have no clear idea what it means to need junk with the addict's special need. You don't decide to be an addict. One morning you wake up sick and you're an addict.



William S. Burroughs

VICE

vice

maleficence, immorality, lechery, carnality, debasement, corruption, decay, depravity, wickedness, lewdness, lust, rot, evil, debauchery, degeneracy

1. A bad or immoral habit.

2. In law enforcement, any of various crimes related (depending on jurisdiction) to prostitution, pornography, gambling, alcohol, or drugs.

In religion, as in life, vice is a matter of perspective. Muslims are not supposed to drink, gamble, or eat pork. Hindus are not supposed to eat beef because cows are considered sacred. Christians, according to the Ten Commandments, are not supposed to lie, steal, work on Sunday, or commit adultery. Jews are not supposed to eat pork and crab because they're considered unclean animals. There are so many contradictions between various religions as to what is considered immoral that it is absurd. Since the vast majority of people on Earth are religious, vice could be classified as a religious matter.

Vice, for the most part, is a matter of perspective. What happens between two consenting adults should be a private matter and not a matter for the state or church. What a person voluntarily puts in their body should be an health issue and not a criminal issue for the state or a moral dilemma for the church.

As we have seen too many times, those who indulge in vice are the very same people who publicly swear to uphold the moral code, namely priests and politicians. Who better to think they can breach trust and go unnoticed but a person in position of trust?

Everything in moderation, as long as it doesn't harm another person or disturb our peace of mind is a good guideline for vice.

Ennui has made more gamblers than avarice, more drunkards than thirst, and perhaps as many suicides as despair.

Buddha

Life is extraordinarily suave and sweet with certain natural, witty, affectionate people who have unusual distinction and are capable of every vice, but who make a display of none in public and about whom no one can affirm they have a single one. There is something supple and secret about them. Besides, their perversity gives spice to their most innocent occupations, such as taking a walk in the garden at night.

Marcel Proust

Every vice has its excuse ready.

Publilius Syrus

He, who practices right, but in the hope of acquiring great renown, is very near to vice.

Napoleon Bonaparte

He that is good will infallibly become better, and he that is bad will as certainly become worse; for vice, virtue, and time are three things that never stand still.

Charles Caleb Colton

More people are flattered into virtue than bullied out of vice.

Robert Smith Surtees

It's a vice to trust all, and equally a vice to trust none.

Seneca

Any of us can achieve virtue, if by virtue we merely mean the avoidance of the vices that do not attract us.

Robert S. Lynd

Vices are their own punishment.

Aesop

Alas, human vices, however horrible one might imagine them to be, contain the proof (were it only in their infinite expansion) of man's longing for the infinite; but it is a longing that often takes the wrong route. It is my belief that the reason behind all culpable excesses lies in this depravation of the sense of the infinite.

Charles Baudelaire

As virtue is its own reward,
so vice is its own punishment.

Thomas Fuller

He that has energy enough to root out a vice should go further, and try to plant a virtue in its place.

Charles Caleb Colton

Vice knows she is ugly, so puts on her mask.

Benjamin Franklin

Half the vices which the world condemns most loudly have seeds of good in them and require moderate use rather than total abstinence.

Samuel Butler

Search other for their virtues, thyself for thy vices.

Benjamin Franklin

The end and perfection of our victories is to avoid the vices.

Alexander the Great

CESSATION

cessation

termination, desistance, ceasing, stop, discontinuance, finish, close, cease

1. A ceasing or discontinuance, as of action, whether temporary or final.

At what point does suffering cease? When we've had enough and put an end to it ourself? Or when others force us to stop the activities that cause suffering? However long suffering endures is up to us. It could take one month or ten years.

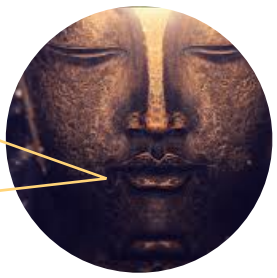
The first step to the cessation of suffering is to identify the factors that caused it.

Is it psychological?
Is it physiological?
Is it self-created?
What are the contributing factors?
Are the usual factors of greed, desire, and attachment involved?
Who are the people involved?
What events are involved?
What are the triggers?

All these answers will come into consciousness after prolonged periods of meditation.

Remember, to cease suffering is to denounce blame. Accept responsibility for the consequence of our choices, even if they were made out of ignorance.

No one saves us but ourselves.
No one can and no one may.
We ourselves must walk the path.



Buddha

Sometimes you have to take a step back
to move forward.

Erika Taylor

Forget what hurt you but never forget what it taught you.

Naturalopist

I used to think nobody liked me and nobody wanted to help me. No. People were waiting for me to do the right thing. Once you help yourself, people will help you. That's just how it goes, and I found out late. People are just waiting for you to change so they can participate in cultivating your life. Or, they're waiting for you to kill yourself and watch you self-destruct. It just took so long for me to realize that people didn't just hate me. They hated the behavior they saw and they wanted to help me if they could, if I gave them a chance and try to start by helping myself.

Mike Tyson

Nirvana means to extinguish the burning fires of the Three Poisons: greed, anger, and ignorance. This can be accomplished by letting go of dissatisfaction.

Shinjo Ito

How many times do you need to get hurt for you to know it's time to let go?

Naturalopist

You've got to be willing to lose everything to gain yourself.

Iyanla Vanzant

If you want to stop doing something one day, save yourself time and stop doing it now.

Trung Nguyen

I count him braver who overcomes his desires than him who conquers his enemies; for the hardest victory is over Self.

Aristotle

You can only help those who are willing to help themselves.

Leeanne Stewart

To understand a sick mind (addiction) is to have been there. To support a sick mind is to have been there, but to carry a sick mind is to go back there!

Naturalopist

It is better to conquer yourself than to win a thousand battles. Then the victory is yours. It cannot be taken from you, not by angels or by demons, heaven or hell.

Buddha

If you don't like where you are, move.
You are not a tree.

Chris Freytag

What you resist persists.

Carl Jung

Sometimes our lives have to be completely shaken up, changed, and rearranged to relocate us to the place we're meant to be.

Naturalopist

All the advice in the world will never help you until you help yourself.

Fred Van Amburgh

ORIGIN

evolution

change, growth, development, progression, transformation, natural process

1. The change in the genetic composition of a population over successive generations.

abiogenesis

spontaneous order, spontaneous generation

1. The natural process of life arising from non-living matter such as simple inorganic compounds.

The origin of life debate consists of two camps: Evolutionists versus Creationists. Or science versus religion, abiogenesis versus biogenesis, empirical evidence versus myth, and Darwinism versus Creationism. These theories are incompatible with each other. In many cases, they contradict each other. However, there is only one truth.

Creationists believe that roughly 6,000 - 10, 000 years ago, god created the Universe and Earth in 6 days and rested on the 7th day, thus Sunday. Creationists also believe in biogenesis—that only living organisms can create other living organisms. Creationists point to the Periodic Table of the Elements, in which all the elements that make up the Universe are inorganic (not living matter, not biological). Therefore, if everything in the Universe is made of inorganic elements, how did organic (biological) life originate from lifeless matter? Creationists also point to the astounding large odds to dismiss the theory of entropy (randomness). Creationists also point to the "missing link" in the theory of evolution—if humans evolved from apes, then why are apes still around?

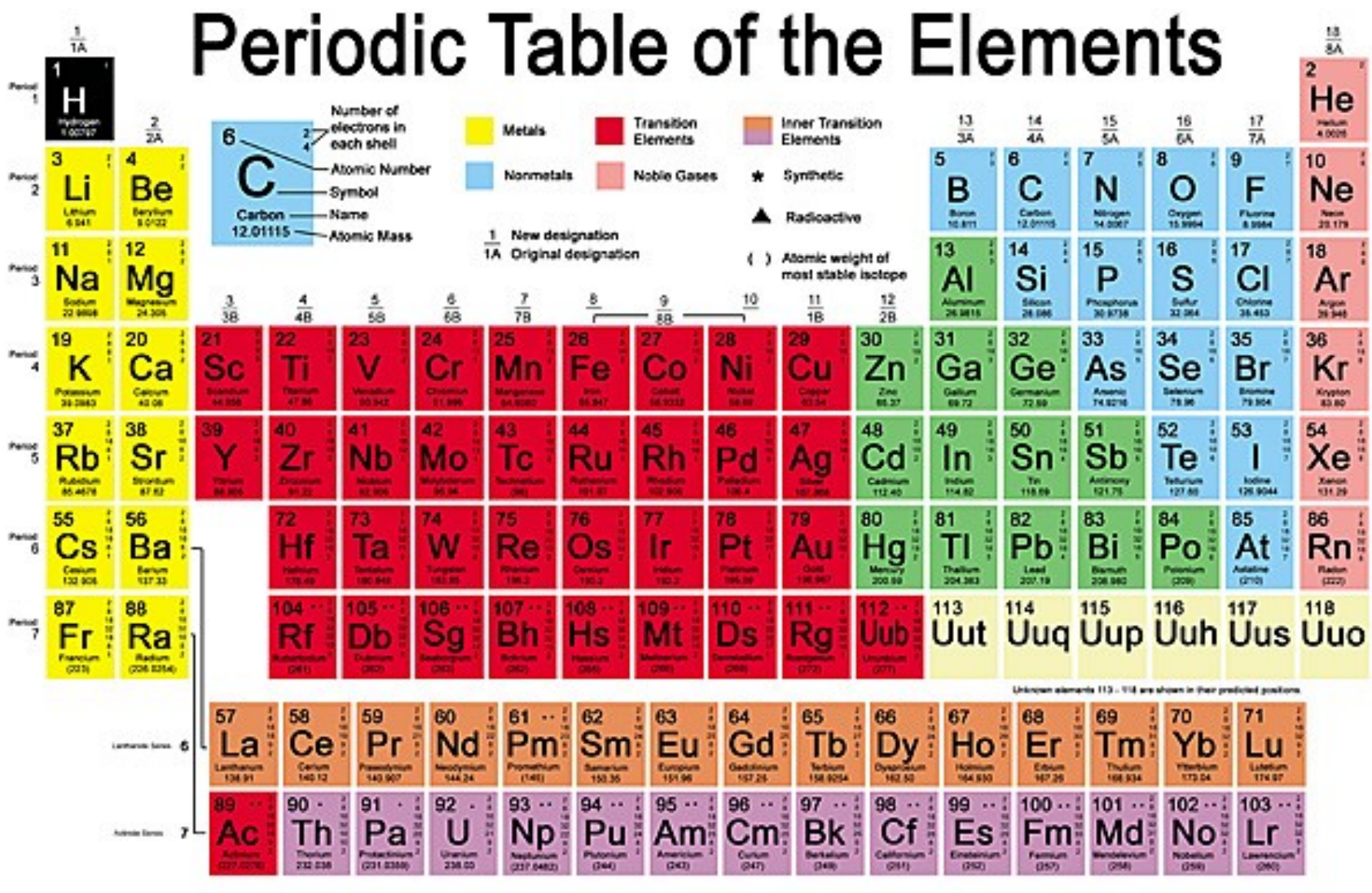
entropy

decay, breakup, randomness, degeneration, disorder

1. In thermodynamics, entropy (usual symbol S) is a measure of the number of specific ways in which a thermodynamic system may be arranged, commonly understood as a measure of disorder.

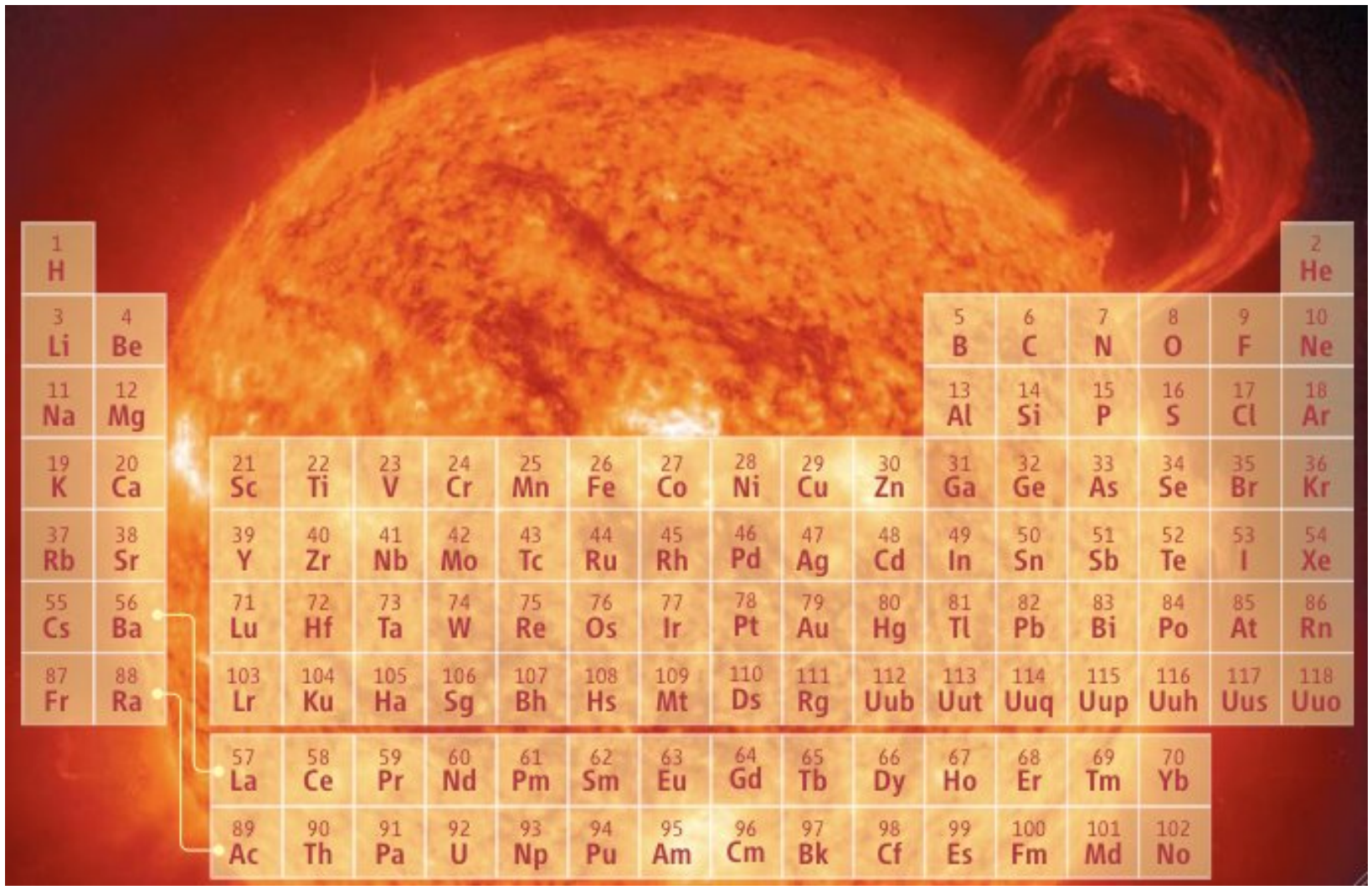
2. The tendency of a system that is left to itself to descend into chaos; uncountable.

Note the Periodic Table of the Elements below. It is believed that everything in the cosmos, including humans, is made of the elements listed below. Elements, such as hydrogen and oxygen, are made of atoms; which in turn are made of electrons, protons, and neutrons; which in turn are made of quarks; which in turn are made of the Higgs Boson elemental particle, or particles. For example, the content of the Sun is 71% hydrogen (H) and 27.1% helium (He). In the fantastically hot furnace of the Sun' core, hy-



drogen and helium (both elements) are fused into heavier elements, such as oxygen(O), carbon(C), nitrogen(N), silicon(Si), magnesium(Mg), neon(Ne), sulfur(S), and iron(Fe). This is an example of how small things become big things in an entropic system, and how simple things become complex things.

When a star, such as our Sun, explodes (supervnova, dies), it gets unimaginably hot and in the process, heavier elements are created, giving birth to asteroids, moons, plan-

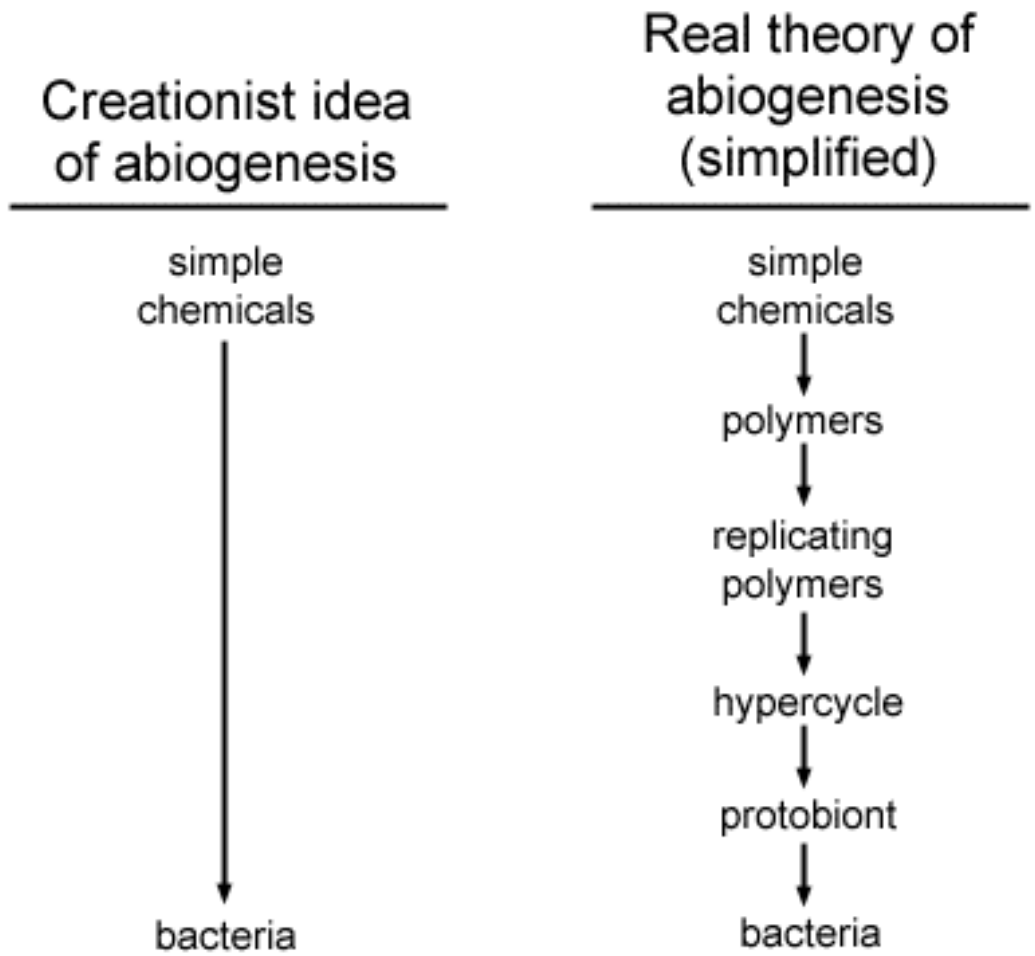


ets, and sometimes new stars. From the inner workings of the Sun, we see a common pattern: given enough time and with the right energy and condition, smaller things become bigger things and simple things become complex things.

However, if everything in the cosmos is made of inorganic elements, how is it possible that biological lifeforms such as plants and humans originated from those lifeless matter? This is the abiogenesis versus biogenesis debate. Creationists believe in biogenesis —that only organic organisms can give life to other organic organisms.

Again, when small things are left alone, with enough time, energy, and entropy working for them, small things become bigger, complex things. Small things amalgamate,

fuse, rearrange, synthesize, and even reproduce. For example, a common compound is water (H_2O), which is made of two elements: hydrogen (H) and oxygen (O).



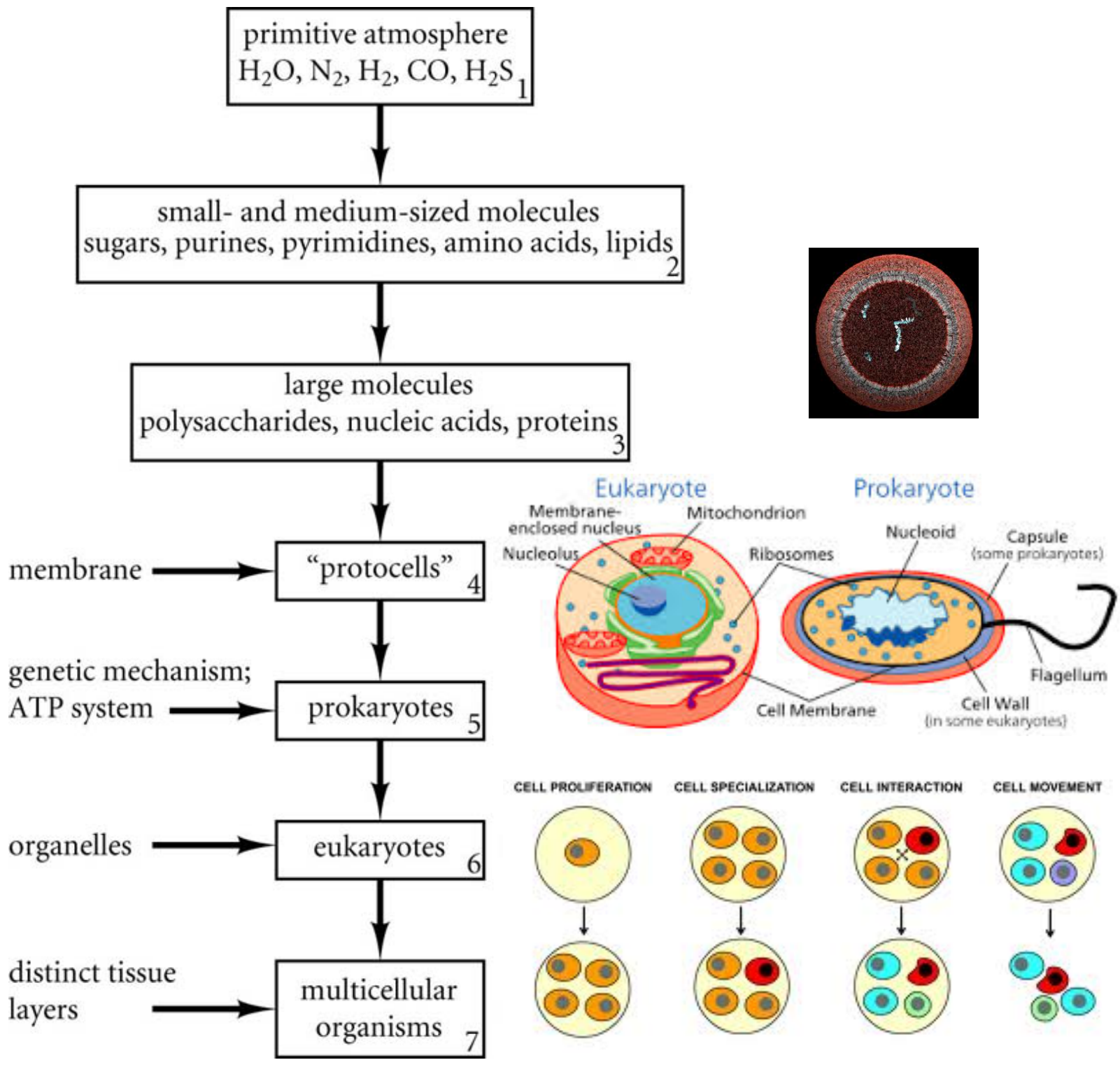
We are infinitesimally small in the infinitely massive cosmos. Our concept of time is in days, weeks, months, and decades—any period longer than eight decades is history to most of us. This is how eighty years looks like: 80 years. Now, imagine 3.55 billion years, or 4.55 billion years, or 13.7 billion years:

- 80 years (average lifespan of many humans)
- 3, 550, 000, 000 years (estimated age of first organic, multicellular organism)
- 4, 550, 000, 000 years (age of Earth)
- 13, 780, 000, 000 years (age of Universe)

We have no personal point of reference or any way to comprehend the staggering expanse of "billions" of years. We only say the billions as a number with a decimal. But behind those billions of years are the processes of entropy and abiogenesis at work. Then add **energy** from radiation, lightning, volcanic eruption, or other energy sources and we have the blueprint for our genetic material.

With enough time, elements amalgamate into simple-inorganic compounds, simple compounds into complex compounds; when energy is added, inorganic compounds turn into organic compounds, organic compounds into molecules, molecules into cells, cells into microbes; microbes and cells into tissues, tissues into organs, organs into multiple organs; into small species, and eventually into humans. It is estimated that the human body has about 100 trillion cells, which varies depending on the mass of the person.

Just like the Sun is comprised of smaller parts, the human body is also comprised of smaller parts. These smaller parts of the Sun and the human body have their beginnings from the Periodical Table of the Elements. And with the blessing of time, entropy, and energy, those elements evolved to form complex, organic matter.



Darwin's Theory Of Evolution—The Premise

Darwin's Theory of Evolution is the widely held notion that all life is related and has descended from a common ancestor: the birds and the bananas, the fishes and the flowers—all related. Darwin's general theory presumes the development of life from non-life and stresses a purely naturalistic (undirected) "descent with modification". That is, complex creatures evolve from more simplistic ancestors naturally over time. In a nutshell, as random genetic mutations occur within an organism's genetic code, the beneficial mutations are preserved because they aid survival—a process known as "natural selection." These beneficial mutations are passed on to the next generation. Over time, beneficial mutations accumulate and the result is an entirely different organism (not just a variation of the original, but an entirely different creature). —www.darwins-theory-of-evolution.com

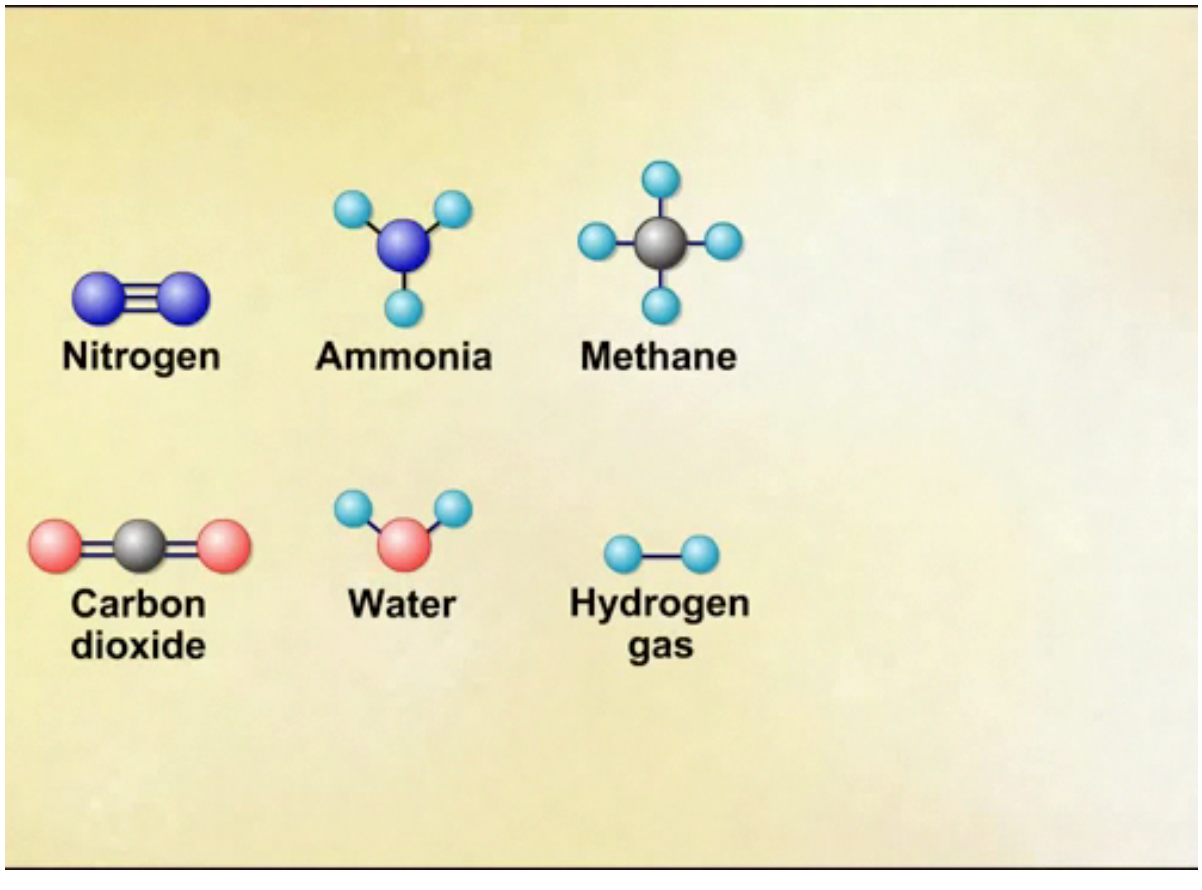
The Missing Link

Creationists point to a perceived flaw in Darwin's theory of evolution: If humans evolved from apes, then why are apes still around? Darwin's theory postulates that humans shared a common ancestor as apes—we did not directly evolve from apes. Therefore, there is no missing link.

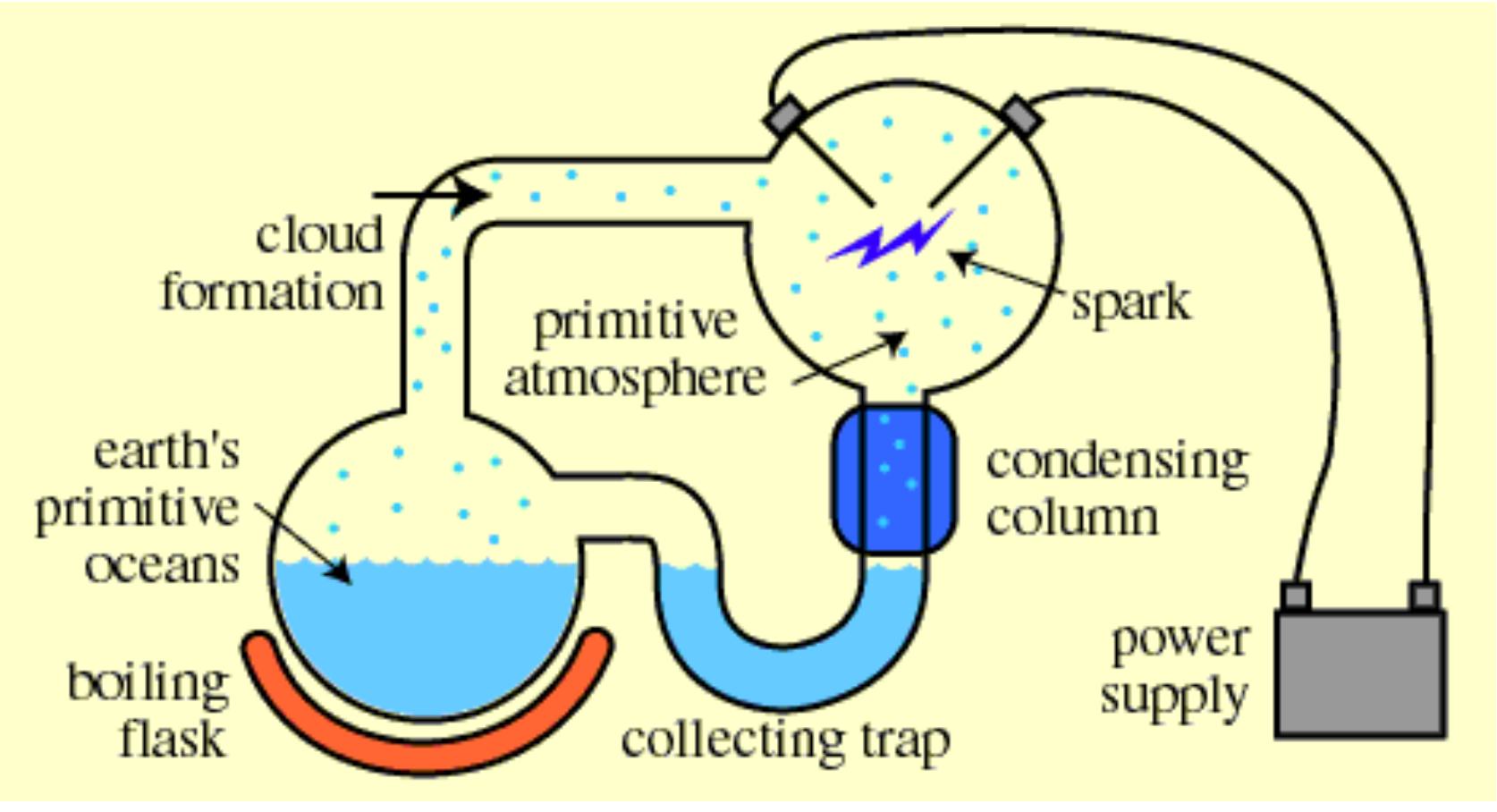
The God Dilemma

We are infinitesimally small in an unimaginably massive cosmos. If there were a god, it would have to be bigger than unimaginably big to have created the Universe and everything in it. If there were a god in this staggering immensity of existence, who is arrogant or delusional enough to think that god would care for her or him? This god, or intelligent designer, would have to be incomprehensibly powerful and its domain so immeasurably vast, that it would not care what we thought of it either way.

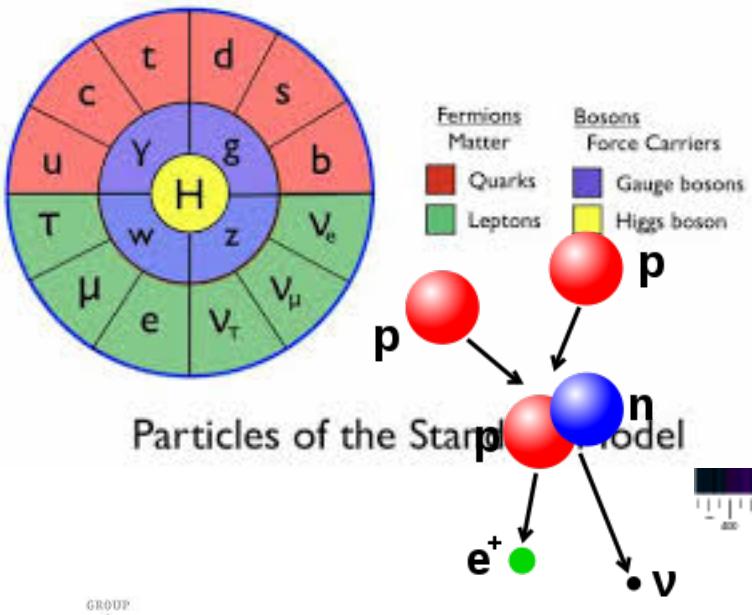
Video: Urey-Miller Experiment, 1953



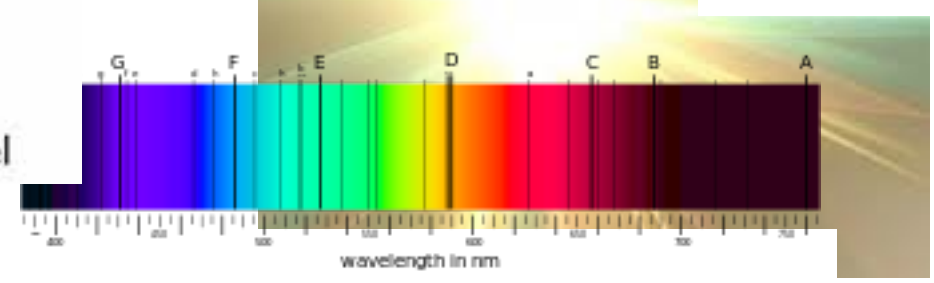
Turning the inorganic into the organic. Video courtesy of Dr. Prodigious HD Animations.

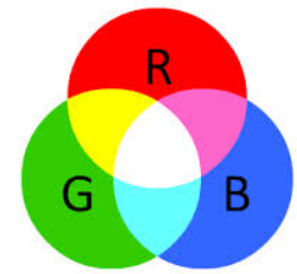


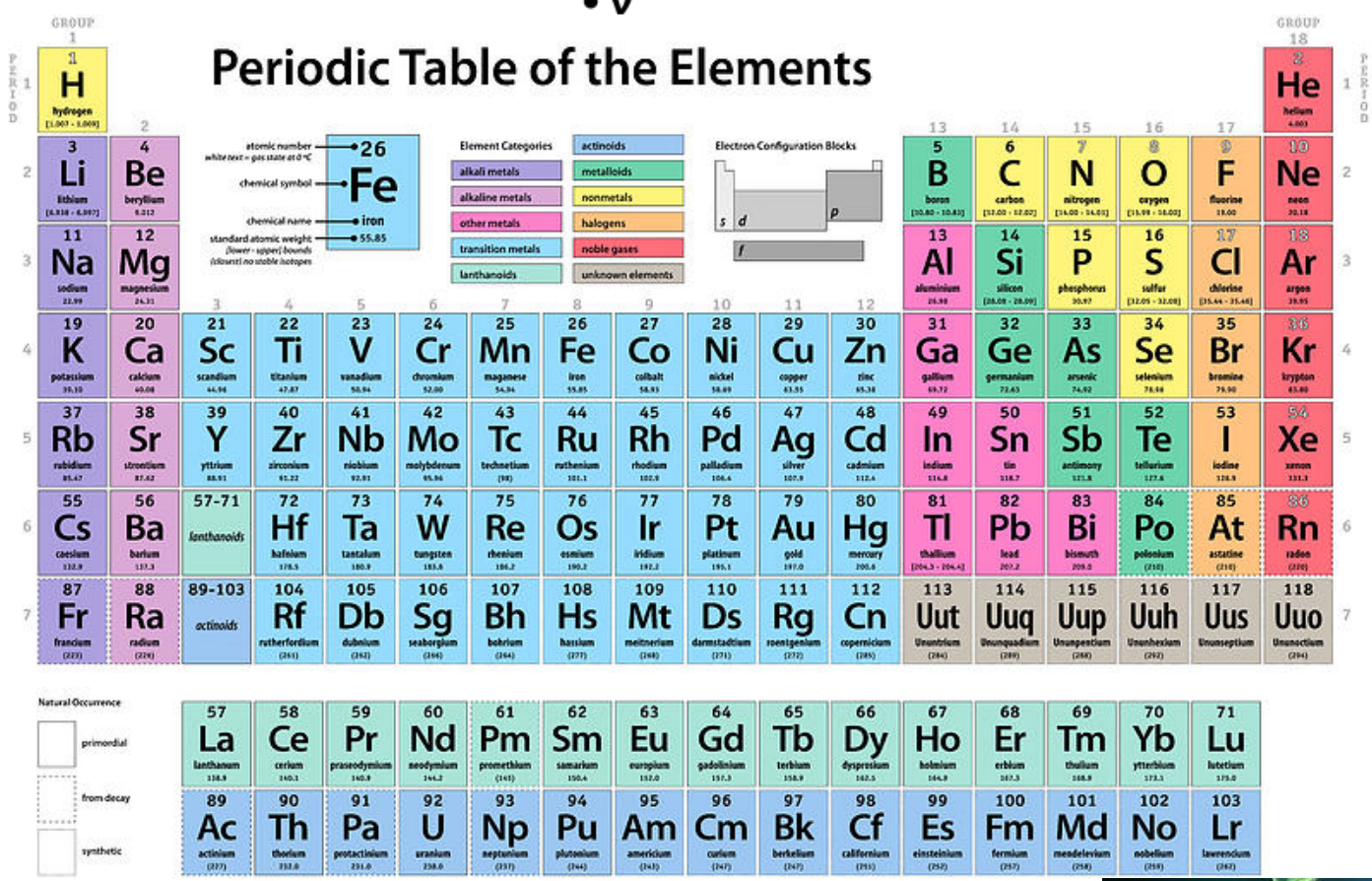
Hydrogen Wave Function
Mercury
Venus
Earth
Mars
Jupiter
Saturn
Uranus
Neptune

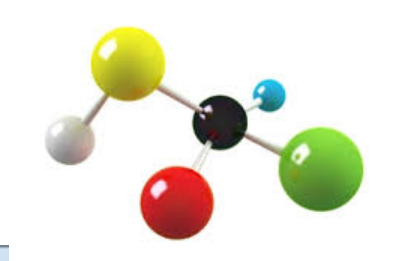


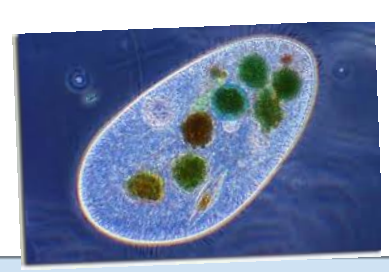
Particles of the Standard Model

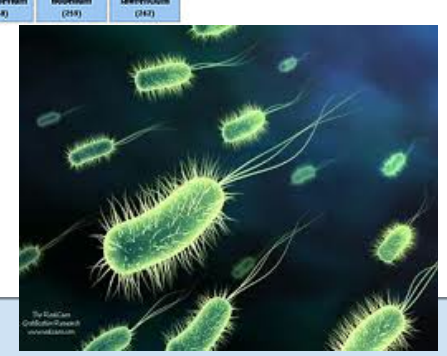


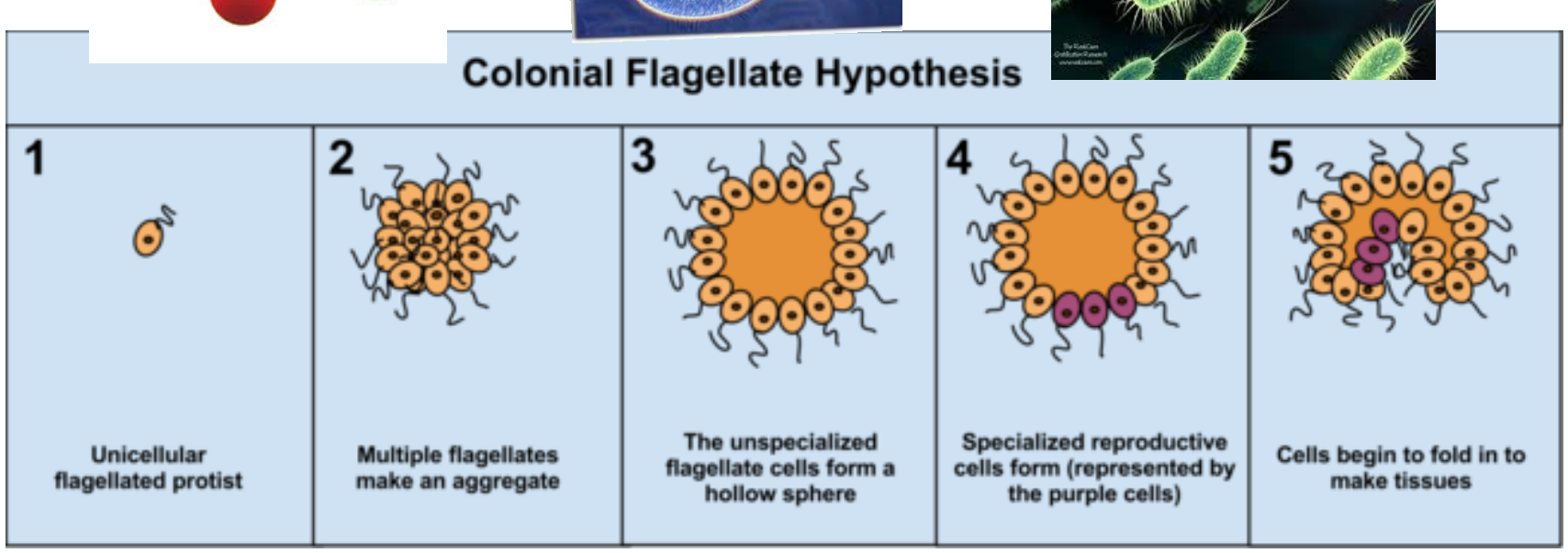


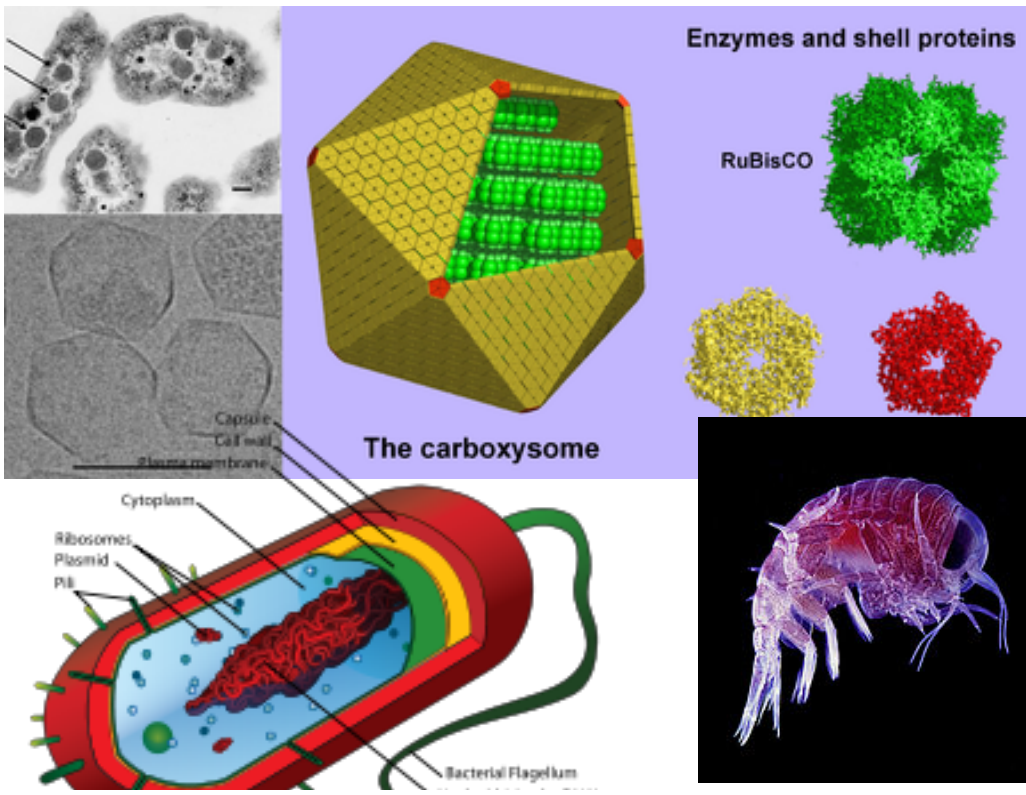




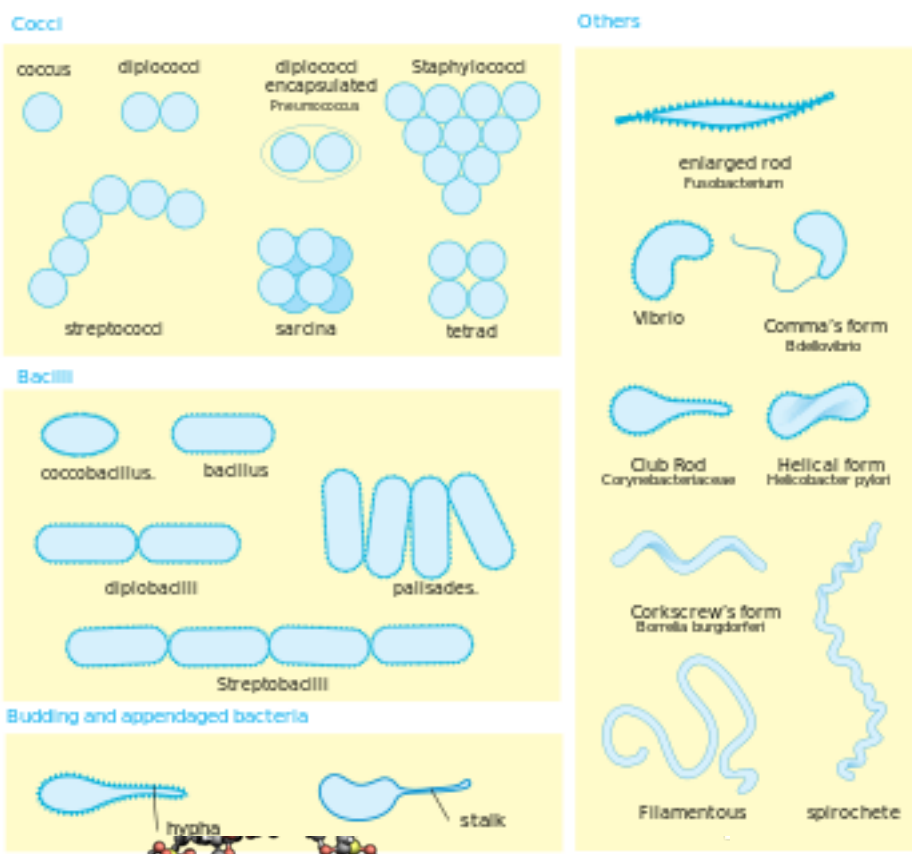


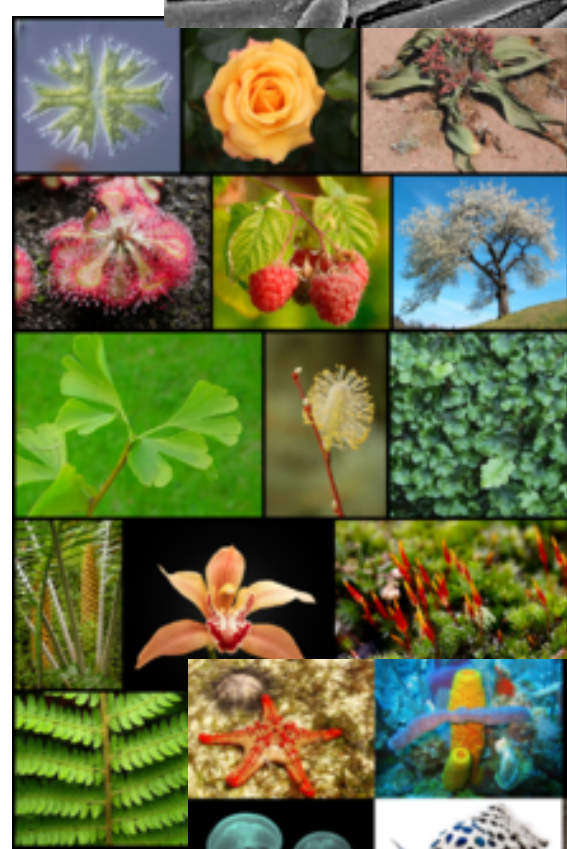


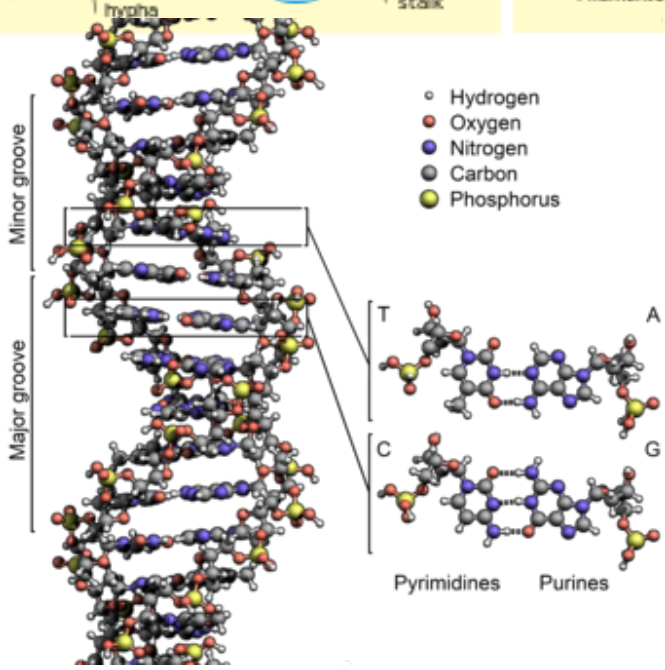


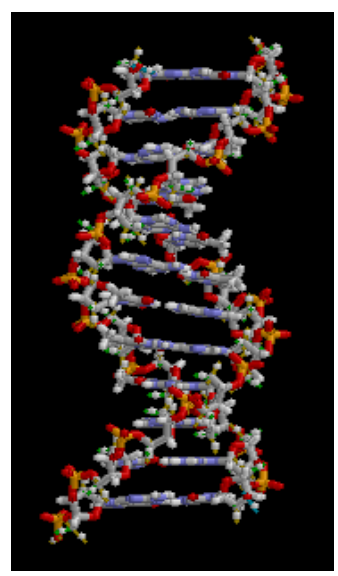

Enzymes and shell proteins
RuBisCO
The carboxysome
Capsule
Cell wall
Plasma membrane
Cytoplasm
Ribosomes
Plasmid
Pili
Bacterial Flagellum

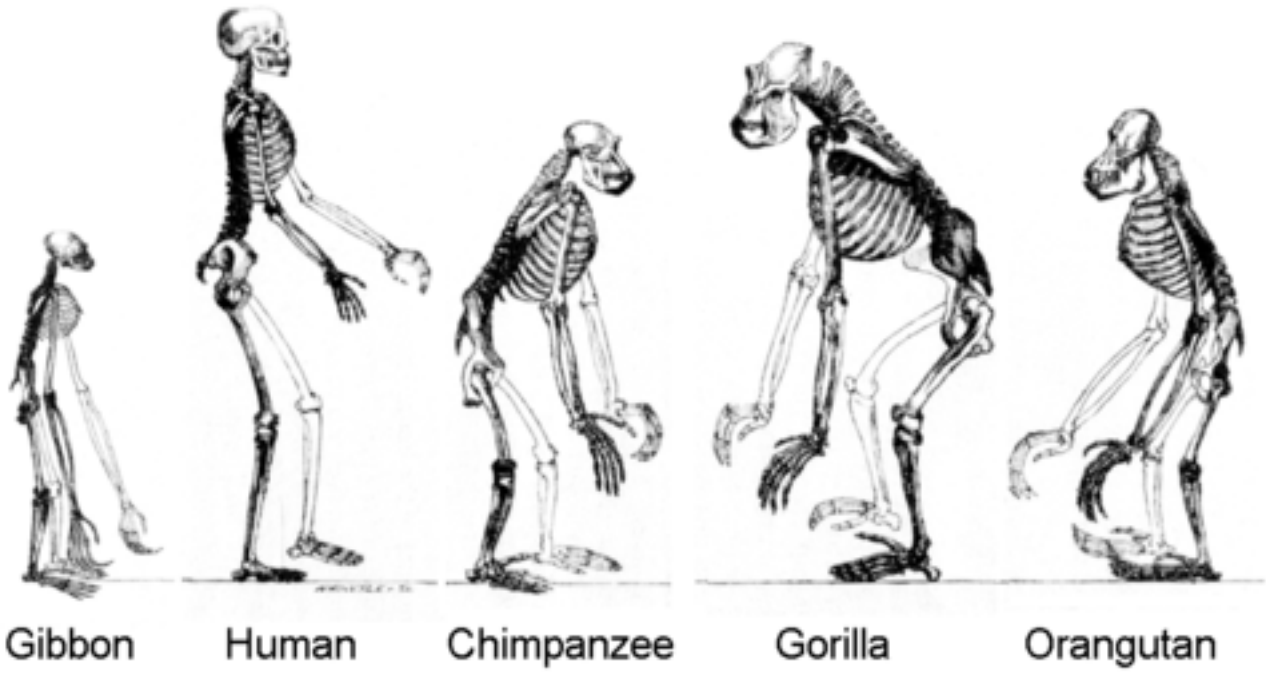
1 µm

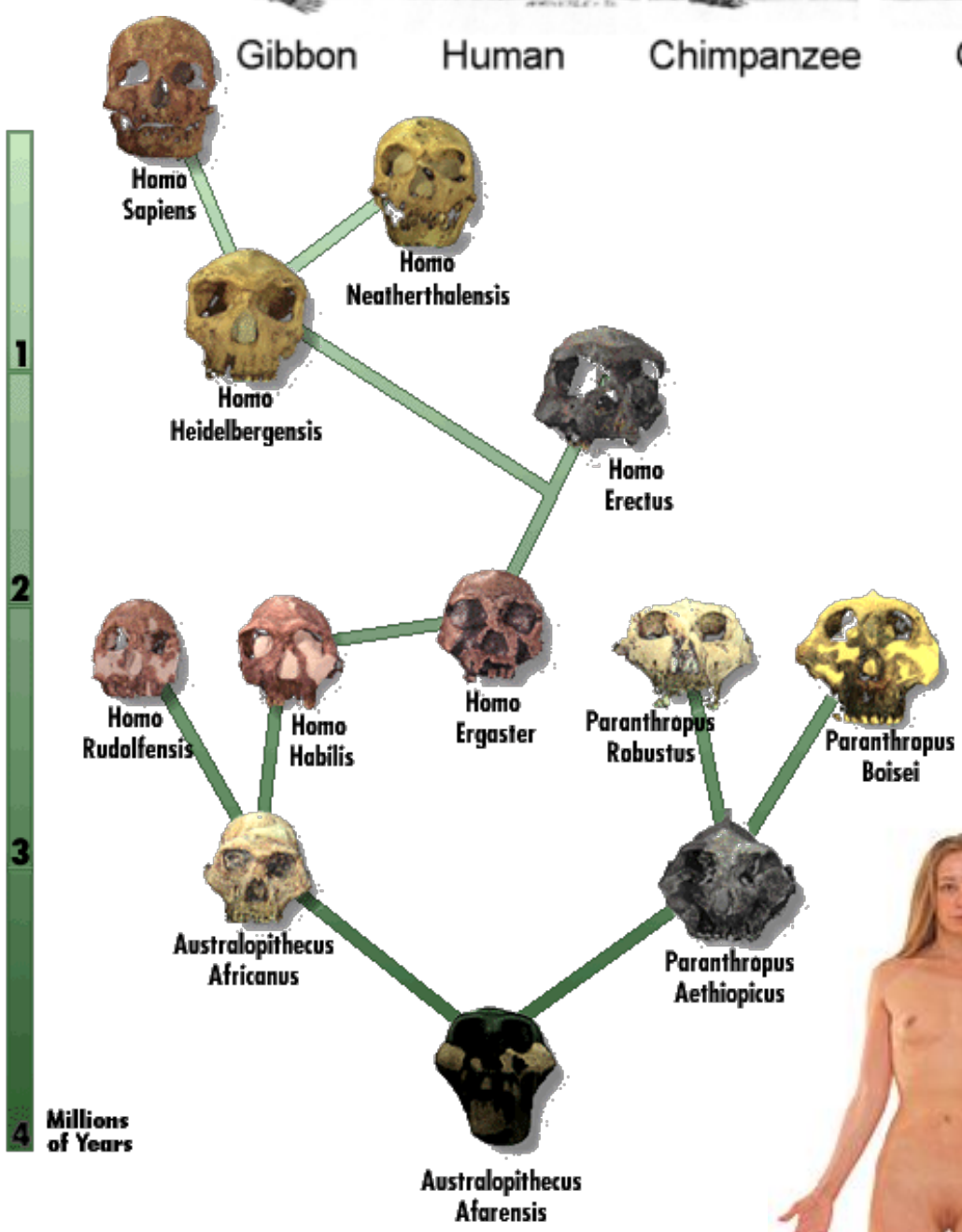

Cocci
coccus
diplococci
diplococci encapsulated
Pneumococcus
Staphylococci
streptococci
sarcina
tetrad
Bacilli
coccobacillus.
bacillus
diplobacilli
palisades.
Streptobacilli
Budding and appendaged bacteria
hypha
stalk
Others
enlarged rod
Fusobacterium
Vibrio
Comma's form
Bdellovibrio
Club Rod
Corynebacteriaceae
Helical form
Helicobacter pylori
Corkscrew's form
Borrelia burgdorferi
Filamentous
spirochete

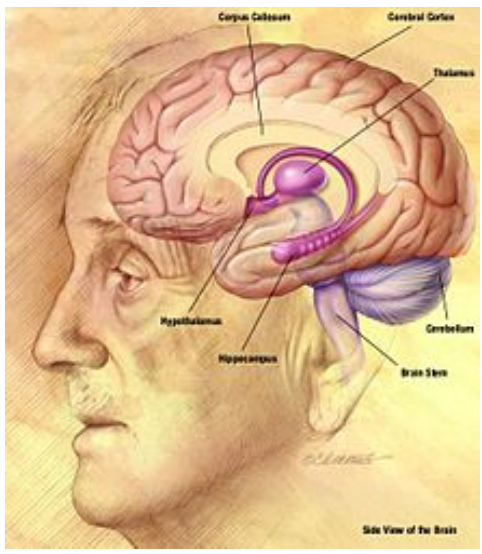



Hydrogen
Oxygen
Nitrogen
Carbon
Phosphorus
Minor groove
Major groove
T
A
C
G
Pyrimidines
Purines

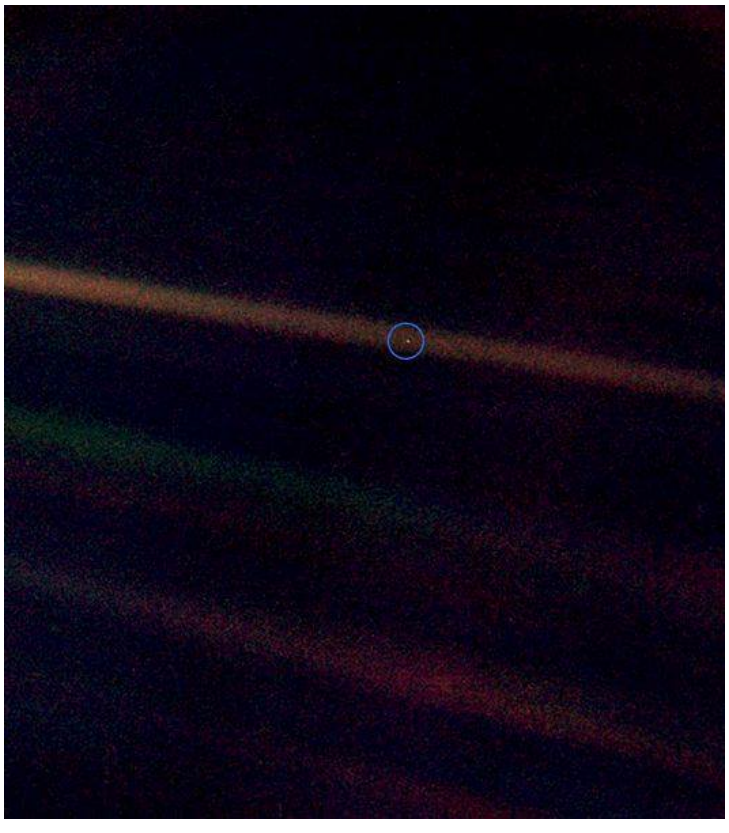



Gibbon
Human
Chimpanzee
Gorilla
Orangutan


Homo Sapiens
Homo Neatherthalensis
Homo Heidelbergensis
Homo Erectus
Homo Rudolfensis
Homo Habilis
Homo Ergaster
Paranthropus Robustus
Paranthropus Boisei
Australopithecus Africanus
Paranthropus Aethiopicus
Australopithecus Afarensis
1
2
3
4
Millions of Years



THE PALE BLUE DOT



Our planet is a lonely speck in the great
enveloping cosmic dark...

Consider again that dot.
That's here.
That's home.
That's us.
On it everyone you love,
everyone you know,
everyone you ever heard of,
every human being who ever was,
lived out their lives.

The aggregate of our joy and suffering,
thousands of confident religions, ideologies, and economic doctrines,
every hunter and forager,
every hero and coward,
every creator and destroyer of civilization,
every king and peasant,
every young couple in love,
every mother and father, hopeful child, inventor and explorer,
every teacher of morals,
every corrupt politician,
every "superstar,"
every "supreme leader,"
every saint and sinner in the history of our species lived there–

on a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam.

Think of the rivers of blood spilled by all those generals and emperors so that in glory and triumph they could become the momentary masters of a fraction of a dot.

Think of the endless cruelties visited by the inhabitants of one corner of this pixel on the scarcely distinguishable inhabitants of some other corner.

How frequent their misunderstandings, how eager they are to kill one another, how fervent their hatreds.

Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the universe, are challenged by this point of pale light.

Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark.

In our obscurity–in all this vastness–there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.

The Earth is the only world known, so far, to harbor life. There is nowhere else, at least in the near future, to which our species could migrate. Visit, yes. Settle, not yet. Like it or not, for the moment,

the Earth is where we make our stand.

Carl Sagan

HUMANITY

NATURALOPY

CELEBRATING HUMANITY

Nature favours diversity to ensure the propagation of her creations; Humanity would be wise to also favour diversity when adopting knowledge. Although diverse and in silos, the foundation for our moral guidelines and belief system have been formulated by Humans before us and those still with us. There is no need to attribute to the gods what Humanity has accomplished. The Sumerians, Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, Egyptians, Romans, Mayans, and other great civilizations of the past once believed in gods. However, their faith did not save their civilizations.

If we are to co-exist, live peacefully, and advance together as a species, we need to abandon our gods, because fables and science are incompatible.

Since time immemorial, our ancestors have conjured ingenious myths and fables to explain the six primary metaphysical questions of existence (the BIG questions):

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

Independently, for millennia, in different continents of the world, small groups of men congregated and concluded that humans could not adequately answer these existential

questions. Therefore, due to our ancestors's limited knowledge of the physical world at the time, they used their brilliant imagination. The answers to these pressing questions were deferred to a higher power, an omnipotent figure or a group of them—god or gods. Within each region of the world, ideas were borrowed and passed down from one religion to another, and as a result of empire building, several religions crossed continents and became pervasive in daily life.

As we are still witnessing, due to perpetual conflict, religion is extremely intrusive and problematic on a global scale. The Jews are still fighting Muslims in Israel-Palestine; Jews and Christians are often at loggerheads; Muslim sects are fighting each other throughout the Middle East; Christians are occupying Muslim countries; and Muslims are persecuting Christians in certain parts of the Middle East. It's a quagmire of hate, and this pattern of hate continues despite the fact that Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are all Abrahamic religions—they share the same root. Each one espouses peace as a central tenet of its religion, but we know it is very different in practice.

The inconsistencies, contradictions, and absurdities of every major religion are so glaring and abundant that it would take an encyclopedia to distill, and even chaff.

Three Religions, One Root, Dozens of Denominations, Countless Interpretations...In Perpetual conflict

First, take the Christians. The Christians believe in the Old Testament and the New Testament bibles, but do not believe in the Torah (Jewish holy book) or Quran (Muslim holy book). Christians believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God sent by god himself to deliver men from their sins. In the Holy Trinity (conceptualized by Theophilus of Antioch, 412 AD.), Christians believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Holy Spirit, and God himself—a 3 for 1 special. The Christian Holy Bible has been translated and re-interpreted several dozen times; therefore, no one knows how different it really is from the original text, if one did exist.

The Christians have been been waiting for over 2,000 years for the second coming of their prophet, Jesus Christ.

500 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.
1000 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

1500 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.
2000 AD: The Kingdom of Heaven is upon us.

The Kingdom of Heaven is never upon us, for one strange reason or another.

Second, take the Jews. The Jews believe in the Old Testament and the Torah (Talmud), but not the New Testament nor the Quran nor Jesus Christ. The Jews believe Jesus Christ and Muhammad were false prophets. The Jews also believe that they are the Chosen People of god and have been waiting over 5,000 years for their Messiah to appear on Earth. For reasons not generally agreed upon, the Jews have been the most persecuted people in all of Humanity.

Third, take the Muslims. The Muslims believe in every Abrahamic holy book: Old Testament, New Testament (Holy Bible), Torah, and especially Islam's Quran. They also believe in all the Abrahamic prophets and messengers, such as Noah, Moses, Daniel, Elijah, Jesus Christ, and particularly Muhammad. Muslims believe that Muhammed was a prophet and a Messenger of God. Essentially, the Islamic religion is based on the account of one man who claimed he had received the words and will of god through the angel Gabriel. This is religious nuttery at its finest.

The religious madness continues when all the sects (movements, denominations) of each major religion are taken into consideration. The confusion and obfuscation are endless since each group has subgroups (branches) with their own interpretation of the "holy" scriptures. As examples:

Christianity: Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, Anglican, Mormon, Jehovah's Witness, Protestant, and so on.

Judaism: Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructional, Hasidism, Kabbalah, and so on.

Islam: Ahmadiyya, Ibadi, Shia, Sufism, Sunni, Wahhabi, Nation of Islam, and so on.

If the word of god is final, then why is it so different? And why are there so many of them? And why do they utterly contradict each other? If we just skim the surface of religion, it would be reasonable to conclude that religion was created like TV channels:

at some point a group felt their interests were not being represented and decided to create a new channel (branch, denomination, sect, group). In this new channel, they concocted whatever they needed in order to attract and appease followers. As long as the sheep watched one channel, everything made sense, and considered divine and brilliant. However, as soon as the followers switched channels (self-education), nothing made sense anymore. There were inconsistencies, absurdities, and bull manure—piles and piles of it. Is it any wonder that the phrase "holy shit" is a cultural lexicon? However, we should applaud our ancestors for having wove brilliantly imaginative stories to explain the nature of existence.

Despite advances in communication, technology, education, and science, the moral guidelines and belief systems of most humans are still grounded in myths and fables. Like children reading fairy tale stories, these religious adherents believe *their* magical wizard exists. They cling to the absurd notion that their magical wizard has chosen them as its favourite children, to the exclusion of others—religion divides, Humanity unites. For these reasons, much of the strife and suffering in the world can be attributed to the divisive nature of religion.

Atavistic: characterized by reversion to something ancient or ancestral;
of a throwback or exhibiting primitivism.

Those who seek comfort in religion have an atavistic worldview—they hold onto the past because the present and future may be unpleasant for them, or they refuse to face the present and future. They refuse to let go and become objective in their worldview.

Religion: When we don't understand how the world works, make it up.

A sore point among the scientific community is that Abrahamic religions still teach their followers that the Universe and Earth were created 6,000 - 10,000 years ago by god, despite overwhelming scientific evidence against the assertion. Science has shown, using radiometric dating, geological stratigraphy, and helioseismic dating, that the Earth is roughly 4.55 billion years old. However, the generally accepted number among Christians is 6,000, and that figure was derived from counting successive generations since Adam and Eve in the Old Testament.

Miseducation is more dangerous than uneducation.

The Six Existential Questions of Life

There is ample, if not conclusive, evidence to support the theory of abiogenesis. In 1953, scientists Stanley Miller and Howard Urey demonstrated the process in which inorganic molecules mutated to complex organic molecules (amino acids, carbohydrates, nucleic acids) roughly 3.5 billion years ago, paving the way for biological life on Earth.

In 1956, using uranium-lead dating and lead-lead dating methods, geochemist Clair Patterson calculated that the Earth was roughly 4.55 billion years old. Even today, Dr. Patterson's estimate is considered accurate within 20-70 million years.

Recently, scientists have re-enacted the creation of our Universe, the Big Bang, in laboratories, particle accelerators, and computer simulations. The data from scientists working independently around the world places our Universe at roughly 13.7 billion years old. We also know from Nagasaki and Hiroshima that when an atom, invisible to the eyes, is split, it releases enough energy to start a chain reaction powerful enough to destroy a city. From these World War II events and our knowledge that mass and energy are interchangeable, we know that something infinitesimally small has the potential to become massively big under the right conditions—this is the awesome power of Nature.

The truth and answers to life are found in science and education, not in religion. Religion hampers our perspective and understanding of the world. Religion is miseducation. A devout religious persons loses precious time; first by miseducation, then by re-education.

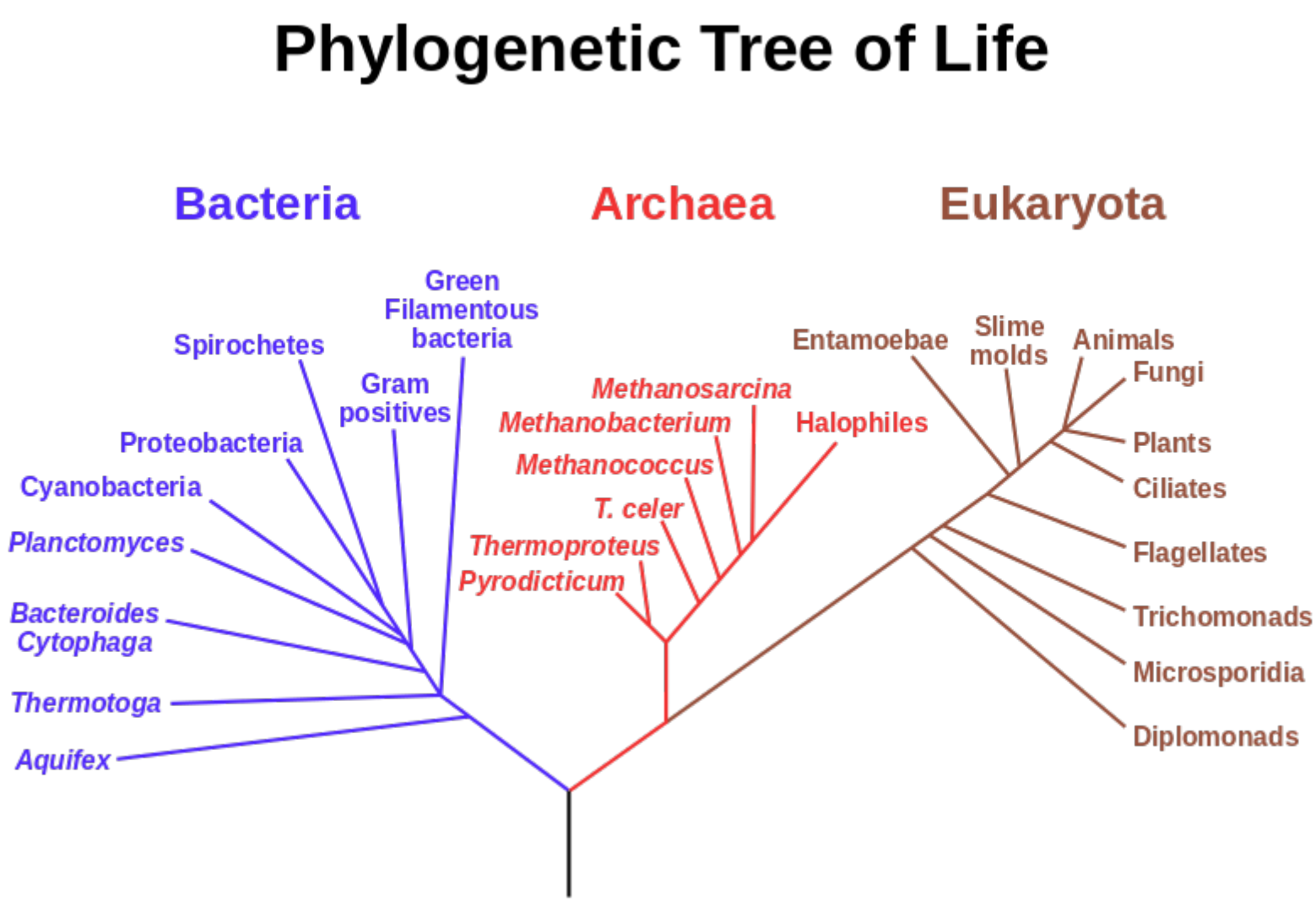
Let us ponder the primary existential questions of life, without involving religion.

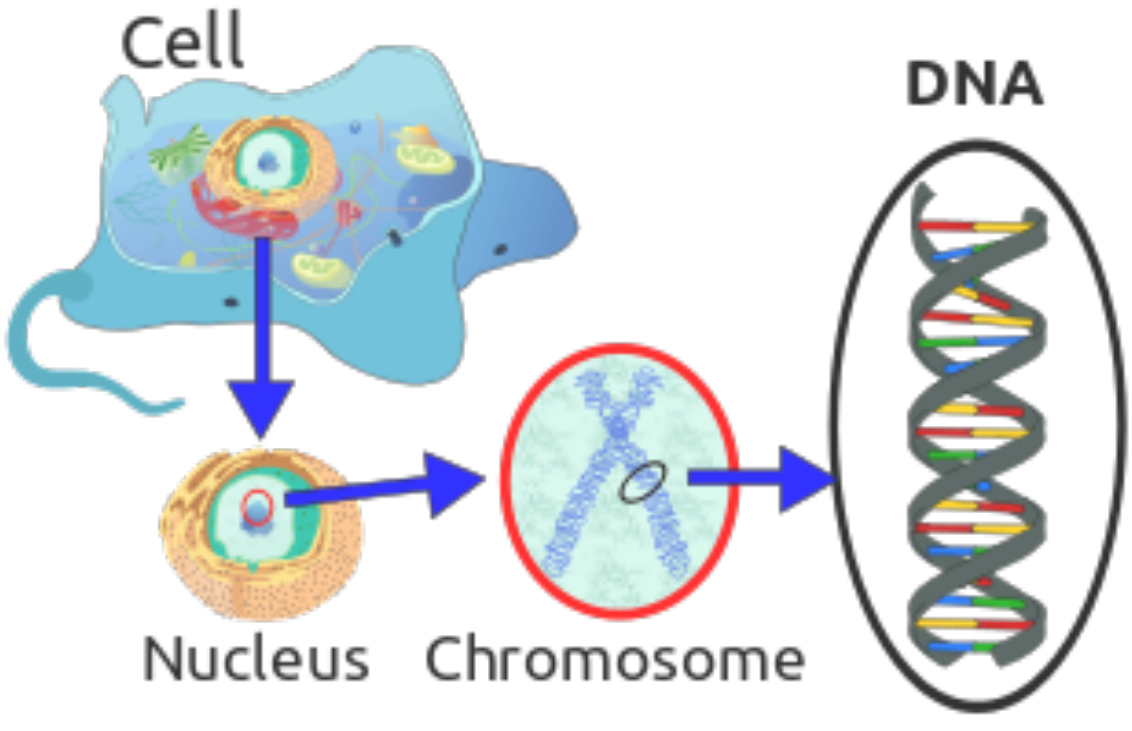
- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

1. Where Did We Come From?

We are all powerful and extraordinary, for we were birthed by the stars. Nature created us through roughly 4.55 billion years of experimentation: from atoms; to chemical elements; to inorganic molecules; to complex-organic molecules; to single-celled organisms; to multicellular organisms of microbes and bacteria; to invertebrates, amphibians, fishes, reptiles, birds, and mammals; then the grand prize of evolution: Homo Sapiens, a thinking and reasoning animal atop the food chain, capable of the greatest vices and virtues.

We are constructed of the same elements as those in the stars: hydrogen, helium, oxygen, carbon, nitrogen, silicon, magnesium, neon, iron, and sulfur. The differences between the elements in our body and those in the Sun are the quantity, ratio, arrangement, and complexity—the fusion of the Sun's lighter elements created heavier elements, then complex molecules in our body. This fact can be verified with electron microscopes, chemical analysis of our cells, spectral analysis, and carbon dating. We share a common ancestor with every living thing on this planet—the spiritualists knew this without requiring scientific evidence when they stated that "everything is connected to everything else."





The average human body is comprised of roughly 100 trillion cells, each evolved over 3.5 billion years to perform a special function in a specific organ. Contrary to popular belief, humans did not evolve from apes—we share a common ancestor with them, just like we share a common ancestry with a butterfly, tree, lion, flower, and every organism on this Earth. Therefore, there is no "missing link" in Charles Darwin's theory of evolution.

Whether biological life began on Earth in the ashes of underwater volcanoes or bacteria from asteroids (meteors) or on the surface of oceans, it began very small as microbes, then amalgamated and evolved from there to bigger organisms.

2. **What Is Our Purpose In Life?**

At the universal level, there is a shared baseline for the purpose of life: eat well, sleep well, mingle well, work well, and enjoy life. Every single study on happiness has shown that our connection to our community is one of the most— many times the most—important factor in how happy we are. Our contribution to our community and connection to Nature form the foundation of happiness and purpose.

At the individual level, the purpose of life is different from person to person. That is, the meaning of life varies depending on the person. It has been said that when we find our passion, we find our purpose. However, history has shown that the most purposeful and remembered lives are those who served Humanity—those who lit the path with glowing lights to show others the way. Their spirits are in this book.

The people who have found their purpose in life share some traits: they went through periods of trial and error before finally deciding what they were good at; they had failed before they succeeded; they enjoy what they do; they feel no need to defend what they do; they view what they do as a passion, not as work or a career; they feel what they do makes a difference in the lives of others; and they give back to their community.

If each and every day of our life, we do something productive that fills our waking hours, that is purpose enough. It will leave the world a better place than we found it.

As Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "The purpose of life is not to find yourself, but to *create* yourself."

The meaning and purpose of life are covered more in depth in Precept 7: Purpose.

3. **Why Do Bad Things Happen To Us?**

Bad things happen to us for the same reason good things happen to us: the choices we make. The choices we make in life are cumulative and eventually end in consequence. When we made bad decisions, we were either ignorant of the repercussion or had a subconscious desire for the outcome. Summarily, good or bad things happen according to karma—the law of cause and effect. What goes around, comes around.

Of course there are exceptions to this karmic balance; two notable exceptions are natural disasters and children. When children, vulnerable and impressionable, are inflicted with suffering or evil, it is because they are dependent on their parents or caretakers, thus the child's karma is inherited. Or in reverse, parents are punished through the suffering of their children. Just like children who benefit from their parents's skillful deeds, so do children suffer from their parents's unskillful deeds. Our deeds affect us and those we care about. Only when children become emotionally independent and self-sufficient are they responsible for their own karma.

We reap what we sow.

4. **Is There A God?**

No.

At least not the ones that have been fabricated by humans. Gods have come and gone throughout history, just like the fideist civilizations that worshipped them.

> Fideism: The doctrine that religion is the basis of all knowledge; that faith is independent of reason.

Religion has nothing to do with morality and science. We can have morality without religion; we can attain spirituality without priests, rabbis, or imams. We can explain and even predict natural phenomena without the aid of an intelligent designer. We understand how the world works without religious textbooks. We have discovered our origin without faith. We can accurately describe how the cosmos works without a god in it.

If a person does not know right from wrong, then they lack morality. They do not lack religion.

If a person does not understand how the world works, then they lack self-education. They do not lack religion. They have not been enlightened.

If we study history, we know that the Sumerians, Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, East Indians, Mayans, and every small and large civilization in-between believed in gods at one time or another. They did this for hundreds and even thousands of years. However, gods were created by our ancestors in an attempt to answer existential questions and explain natural phenomena.

- What caused lightening and thunder? God was angry.
- Was a comet a good omen or bad omen? Ask the fortune teller.
- What did a earthquake foretell? The end of the world.
- Why did it rain? Some god in the sky was sad and crying.
- Why did the seasons change? The harvest goddess's daughter was kidnapped and the daughter had to spend six months in hell, this made the goddess sad and

gloomy, therefore winter; when her daughter was returned for six months, the goddess was in a sunny disposition, therefore summer.
- What did the planets, stars, and other celestial bodies represent? Gods and goddesses.

Religion begins where knowledge ends.

Now, let's scrutinize religion from a modern perspective.

- Did Moses really talk to a burning bush on a mountaintop that was supposedly god?
- Did Noah really save civilization and all the animals on his big boat (arc)?
- Was Jesus really the child of a virgin mother; and he walked on water, and arose from the dead?
- Did Muhammad really receive the will of god through an angel?

Unfortunately, there are billions of people who still believe religious nonsense. They have fought, still do fight, and will fight each other to the death for their outdated religious beliefs. Witness the Christian Crusade, the Muslim Jihad, and the Jewish Protocols of the Elders of Zion (if it's to be believed as authentic). Three religions with supposedly one god, and in practice they can't even agree on the basic principles of that one god, hence the perpetual conflicts. The god question is, "Whose god?"

We are the most advanced civilization that Earth has ever harbored. Despite this fact, there are hundreds of millions of people who lack the fundamental principles of basic science, thus the popularity of religion. In a 2014 survey by the U.S. National Science Foundation, 26% of Americans thought the Sun revolved around the Earth; similarly, 34% of Europeans thought the same thing. In addition, 52% of Americans were unaware that humans evolved from earlier species of animals. The fact that the Earth revolves around the Sun was settled by Nicolaus Copernicus in the 16th century, but was suppressed by the Catholic Church. Similarly, the theory of evolution by Charles Darwin is being perverted and suppressed to this very day by devout Christians, Jews, and Muslims. Now, if the U.S. and Europe are considered First World, how much hope of enlightenment is there in Developing and Third World countries that are steeped in religion?

A Brief History of Religion

A religion becomes dominant when it is adopted by the elite and ruler. It's a top-down adoption and expansion pattern, and those who blindly follow are considered "sheep" by the enlightened. This herd mentality, blind faith, follow-the-leader, peer pressure, mob rule, or by any other name is true of the Christian, Jewish, and Muslim faiths.

First, examine Christianity, which was an illegal and persecuted cult for centuries throughout the Roman Empire. However, this cult became fashionable when Roman Emperor Constantine I adopted it as his official religion and instituted it in the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AD. From there, Christianity "borrowed" most ideas for Jesus Christ's divinity from the Pagans and Egyptians: birth from a virgin mother, rise after three days of death, Christmas for Winter Solstice, the son of god, the bringer of light, and so on. The Christian faith is a mashup of other faiths. Not surprisingly, there are now scholars who doubt if Jesus Christ had existed at all. If these scholars are right, then Jesus Christ was a fictional character. If Jesus did exist, he might have been a spiritual teacher or philosopher who was lionized and exaggerated by the Creed of Nicaea and subsequent ecumenical councils of Nicaea.

We know from history that Jesus Christ's godly features were fabricated to make him more appealing to the commoners. In truth, Jesus Christ was a product manufactured by the apostles of Nicaea, the predecessors to the priests of the Roman Catholic Church. As we note from history, Jesus was not considered divine until three hundred years after his supposed birth, when it was convenient for the ruling authority. Since the First Council of Nicaea in 325 AD, and largely thanks to the largesse of Emperor Constantine I, Christianity had spread with the Roman Empire. However, the Roman Empire has long since collapsed, but the Holy Roman Empire is alive and well in the Roman Catholic Church—the Pope has replaced the Emperor. The largest landowner in the world today is the Roman Catholic Church (the Vatican). There is much more to Christianity than religion.

Second, examine Judaism. It is believed that most Jews today are not descendants of the original Semites of the Middle East, but they are converts of European and Turkic heritage (Khazarian Empire theory, 618 - 1048 AD). Nowadays, to label someone a Jew is ambiguous. The Jews could be identified as a race who shared a common ancestry in Judea (Palestine), as the Romans called it. Or the Jews could be identified as a religious group who have adopted Judaism. Since 250 AD, the Jews have been ex-

pelled about 109 times from territories and nations in which they had inhabited—the two most prominent are the Spanish Inquisition (1492) and the World War II Holocaust (1939 - 1944). The Jews have also been victims of numerous edicts and pogroms. Whether they were considered subversive, as scapegoats, or just generally disliked for their believe that they were the Chosen People of God, the Jews as a group have suffered much throughout history. As religious hogwash goes, if god loved the Jews so much that he made them the Chosen People, he would have made more of them, like the 1.1 billion East Indians or the 1.3 billion Chinese. And god certainly would not have created the Israelites to be dependent on the generosity of American taxpayers.

Third, examine Islam, which is the youngest of the three major religions today. Islam came about when Muhammad (Abū al-Qāsim Muḥammad ibn ʿAbd Allāh ibn ʿAbd al-Muṭṭalib ibn Hāshim, 570 - 632 AD) had a series of "divine" revelations. He claimed that the angel Gabriel had revealed to him the words of god. These revelations were recorded in what is now the Muslim holy book, the Quran. When the sheiks and kings of many Arabian tribes adopted Muhammad's teachings, their followers became Muslim adherents. The word "Muslim" means he who submits to god, or the will of god. In whole, the Muslim faith is based entirely on the account of one man, a businessman no less, who claimed an angel had spoken to him, and that this angel had revealed to him the will of god. If anyone made that claim today they would be locked up in an psychiatric ward and the key thrown away.

Destructive Muslim concepts such as infidels, Sharia Laws, fatwa, and jihad are familiar to non-Muslims. The Quran appears to be a book of fiction written by a man similar to the one who founded Scientology, Ron L. Hubbard. Humanity could face another Dark Age if Islam is spread unchecked. Islam is a backward religion, nothing in it agrees with reason, science, and especially basic human rights.

The three major religions have their root in the Middle East. Today, the region of the Earth that is constantly at war is the Middle East—people with the same ancestry killing each other because they belong to different sects or branches of the same religion. That is Karma on display. If left unrestrained, these religious numbskulls will continue to kill each other to establish nations governed by religious laws (read: theocratic societies, outdated, backward, irrational, oppressive, tyrannical).

Religion was, and is still, used to control people, not enlighten them; religion is the dumbing down of Humanity's potential, because religion is arbitrary and subjective. It is science that enlightens and reason that establishes the principles of morality.
If we are to seriously enquire about god, we need to ask questions that we have no answers to.

- Who created god?
- Does god exist in the form of mass, energy, or both?
- Why has the voice or image of god never been heard or seen by a group of people? It's always unverifiable stories from a lone nut in the wilderness.

We've mapped the Earth, the solar system, part of the Milky Way galaxy, and have begun creating a 3-dimensional map of the Universe—where does god reside? If the answers is "everywhere", that is Nature. Nature exists everywhere.

Religious fanatics like to challenge the agnostic or atheist with, "If you don't believe in god, then what do you believe in?"

A good place to start would be to believe in universal knowledge, collective wisdom, and spirituality. Humanity. Nature. Science.

If you need to believe in someone, believe in yourself.

5. **Are We Alone In The Universe?**

Most unlikely. There are an estimated 100-400 billion stars in a galaxy and 100 billion galaxies in the Universe, and these estimates keep increasing as new discoveries are made. Mathematically, according to the theory of chaos and the Frank Drake equation, there are millions of lifeforms in the Universe and probably thousands with our intellectual capacity, and some even exceeding our intellectual capacity. The primordial soup of elements that kickstarted life on Earth is a mathematical reality in millions of other solar systems in the cosmos.

> Abiogenesis: The original evolution of life or living organisms from inorganic or inanimate substances.

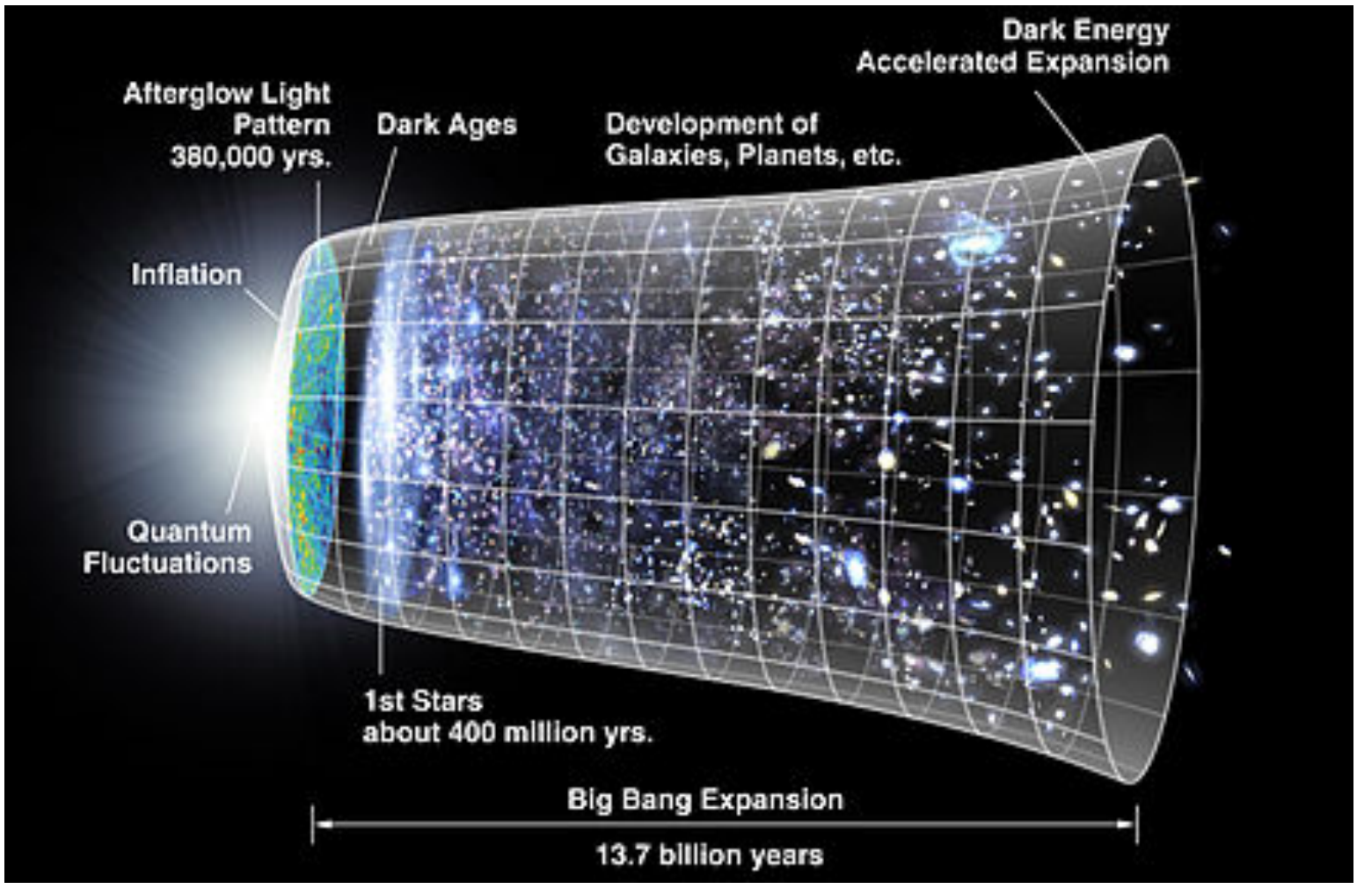
The process of abiogenesis that occurred on Earth, based on mathematical probabilities alone, is repeatable on other planets: atoms forged into light elements, light elements fused into heavier elements in the Sun, then a primordial soup of elements that meshed into inorganic molecules, then electrified and energized to form organic molecules, then prokaryote cells (cells with no nucleus), then eukaryote cells (cells with a nucleus capable of passing on genetic information), to multicellular organisms, to microbes and bacteria, then various species of amphibians, birds, arthropods, reptiles, and mammals. We are the product of Nature's experiment and patience, and Her laws permeate the cosmos. As Michael Faraday put it, "Nothing is too wonderful to be true, if it be consistent with the laws of nature."

Furthermore, according to String Theory, our Universe may only be one of many universes in a multiverse.

Our Universe is roughly 13.7 billion years old. The Earth is approximately 4.55 billion years old and not 6,000 - 10,000 according to Christian (Bible), Jewish (Torah), and Muslim (Quran) textbooks. Christianity, Judaism, and Islam are Abrahamic religions—they share the same root and believe that life originated in a corner of the Middle East 6,000 - 10, 000 years ago through Creationism. Furthermore, peace is supposed to be a central tenet of these religions but they have been locked in perpetual conflict with no end in sight.

Our spiral Milky Way Galaxy (top) and Universe (bottom).

We are infinitesimally small in the cosmos. We do not need religion to divide us even smaller.



6.What Happens To Us After We Die?

There is an afterlife. We know this from observation. However, there is no evidence supporting the notion of heaven and hell as places of reward and damnation in the afterlife. Our afterlife resides in the memories of those we leave behind. Think of all the great people throughout history who are still with us in spirit because they touched our lives—their souls are their Afterlife. Whether our soul becomes famous or infamous, praised or condemned, admired or damned in the afterlife depends on whether we performed good or evil while we lived.

The good that we do will be remembered after we die—the greater the deeds, the longer the afterlife. Our essence lives on through loved ones and service to Humanity.

Throughout this book, we've met the afterlives of many great people who have enlightened us and shown us the path.

The cycle of life as designed by Nature is: birth and death, birth and death, ad infinitum...When something dies, its energy gives birth to another entity in the cosmos.

Life With Nature In The Cosmos

In summary, the 6 Big Questions of life are:

- Where did we come from?
- What is our purpose in life?
- Why do bad things happen to us?
- Is there a god?
- Are we alone in the Universe?
- What happens to us after we die?

If the first question can be answered with empirical evidence and by the process of elimination, then the answer to, “Is there a god?”, should be self-evident.

The God Dilemma

We are infinitesimally small in an unimaginably massive cosmos. If there were a god, it would have to be bigger than unimaginably big to have created the Universe and everything in it. If there were a god in this staggering immensity of existence, who is arrogant or delusional enough to think that god would care for her or him? This god, or intelligent designer, would have to be incomprehensibly powerful and its domain so immeasurably vast, that it would not care what we thought of it either way.

DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to all the brave women and men throughout history who fought against oppression, injustice, and tyranny. They stood up against oppression, injustice, and tyranny by the sword and of the mind. It is because of their courageous souls that many of us are able to enjoy the liberties and amenities of modern life. They are forever with us in spirit because they advanced knowledge and protected innate human rights for every person. They did what was beneficial for Humanity and were awarded with an everlasting Afterlife—their voices echo in this book.

We must have the courage and resolve to carry on their work. In doing so, we can only hope that our light will shine a fraction as bright as theirs in our Afterlife.

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